RECORD YOURSELF | PROMOTE YOUR MUSIC | USE HARMONICS

ACOUSTIC GU

MARCH/APRIL 2019 | A

7 SONGS TO PLAY
FLEETWOOD MAC LANDSLIDE
NICK DRAKE PINK MOON
TRADITIONAL HOME ON THE RANGE
WHISKEY BEFORE BREAKFAST
. . . AND MORE



ALAN LOMAX

FOLKLORIST
FIELD RECORDER
GAME CHANGER

+
ERIC SKYE
JIM D'ADDARIO
NICK DRAKE

NEW GEAR
TAYLOR GRAND PACIFICS
COLLINGS C100
CENTRANCE MIXERFACE R4
CLOUDVOCAL ISOLO CHOICE



SOME MUSICAL BREAKTHROUGHS HAPPEN IN STUDIOS. SOME IN GARAGES.

And some in forests.

ON A DUSTY ROAD OUTSIDE YAOUNDÉ, CAMEROON, YOU CAN PEER INTO THE AFRICAN FOREST AND SEE SOMETHING TOTALLY OUT OF PLACE: VILLAGERS PLANTING EBONY SAPLINGS. ALL SUPPORTED BY A GUITAR MANUFACTURER FROM EL CAJON, CALIFORNIA. DESPITE THE FACT THAT EBONY HAS BEEN USED IN GUITAR AND VIOLIN FINGERBOARDS FOR CENTURIES, THE MUSIC INDUSTRY HAD DONE VERY LITTLE TO REPLANT IT. SINCE WE HAVE NO DESIRE TO EVER MAKE GUITARS WITHOUT EBONY, WE TEAMED UP WITH SOME OF THE WORLD'S BEST RESEARCHERS AND FORESTERS TO STUDY HOW TO REPLANT IT ON A LARGE SCALE. NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY, WE'RE PLANTING, GROWING, AND HARVESTING EBONY SUSTAINABLY. ONE LOOK INTO THAT FOREST IN CAMEROON REVEALS SOMETHING ELSE SPROUTING: HOPE. NOT JUST FOR EBONY, BUT FOR THE FUTURE OF TONEWOODS WORLDWIDE. WATCH THE WHOLE STORY *at taylorguitars.com/ebonyproject.*

QUALITY Taylor® GUITARS

Step forward. MUSIC IS WAITING.™

©2018 TAYLOR GUITARS



YAMAHA

@YamahaMusicUSA

http://4wrd.it/A5SERIES

Designed and crafted in Japan to be the ideal performance acoustic-electric guitars, the A5 Series are perfectly suited for the stage and your creativity.

SERIES A

SWEETWATER IS YOUR PREMIER ONE-STOP SHOP FOR GUITARS, EFFECTS, AMPS, AND MORE.



Ernie Ball Music Man StingRay Special 5HH, **Gallien-Krueger** 1001RB-II, **Gallien-Krueger** Neo 412, **Pearl** Music City Custom Reference Pure Shell Pack with Matching Snare, **Sabian** AA Performance Cymbal Set, **Dreadbox** Epsilon, **Darkglass** Alpha Omega Ultra, **Pigtronix** Ringmaster, **Martin** D-42, **PRS** Mark Tremonti MT15 Tube Head, **PRS** Mark Tremonti Cabinet, **Fender** Player Series Stratocaster, **Wampler** Reflection, **Keeley** Aria, **Revv** G3, **MXR** EVH 5150 Chorus, **EarthQuaker Devices** Aqueduct, **BOSS** GT-1000

Sweetwater®

Music Instruments & Pro Audio

THE SWEETWATER **DIFFERENCE**

55-point Inspection

FREE Shipping**

FREE Tech Support

FREE 2-year Warranty

(800) 222-4700 **Sweetwater.com**

0% INTEREST for 24 MONTHS*

on purchases of select manufacturers' products made with your Sweetwater Credit Card between now and March 31, 2019 – 24 equal monthly payments required.

*Offer applies only to single-receipt qualifying purchases. No interest will be charged on promo purchase and equal monthly payments are required equal to initial promo purchase amount divided equally by the number of months in promo period until promo is paid in full. The equal monthly payment will be rounded to the next highest whole dollar and may be higher than the minimum payment that would be required if the purchase was a non-promotional purchase. Regular account terms apply to non-promotional purchases. For new accounts: Purchase APR is 29.99%; Minimum Interest Charge is $2. Existing cardholders should see their credit card agreement for their applicable terms. Subject to credit approval. **Sweetwater.com/about/free-shipping

CONTENTS



BILL EVANS

‘Although recording used to mean going to a studio, you can now achieve professional-quality results at home with a modest amount of gear.’
DOUG YOUNG
p.30

Features

16 Southern Guitar Journeys
Folklorist Alan Lomax and his treasure trove of steel-string discoveries
By Nathan Salsburg

22 Things Behind the Sun
The inner workings of Nick Drake’s idiosyncratic guitar style
By Adam Perlmutter

Special Focus
Recording and Marketing Yourself

30 Home Recording for Acoustic Guitar
A primer on the best ways to capture your music for posterity—or yourself
By Doug Young

36 Promoting Your Music
How the publicity landscape has changed in the age of social media
By Phil Hood

Miscellany

9 Feedback
10 The Front Porch
11 Community
80 Acoustic Guitar Showcase
97 Ad Index

March/April 2019
Volume 29, No. 9, Issue 315

On the Cover
Alan Lomax

Photograph
From the Alan Lomax Collection at the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Association for Cultural Equity

CONTENTS

Taylor 717, p. 84



SETUP

14 Guitar Talk
Eric Skye on intentional limitations and the blues

PLAY

40 The Basics
Applying chord theory to the fretboard

45 Woodshed
Learn Al Petteway's unique approach to the Celtic standard "The Choice Wife"

48 Weekly Workout
How to produce and use harmonics

SONGS

55 Acoustic Classic: Landslide
Stevie Nicks' Fleetwood Mac classic

60 Acoustic Classic: Pink Moon
Nick Drake tune is wrapped in mystery

64 World Premiere: Song for Liam
Buck Curran's loving tribute to his oldest son

68 Pickin': Whiskey Before Breakfast
A flatpicking masterpiece

74 Campfire: Home on the Range
Western standard with five easy chords

94 From the Playlist: Golden Embers
Mandolin Orange's somber, pretty song

AG TRADE

76 Makers & Shakers
Jim D'Addario on his family's string legacy

78 Ask the Expert
Can bridge pins change your sound?

84 Review: Taylor Grand Pacific 717 and 517e Builder's Editions
Two new models with innovative bracing

88 Review: Collings C100
A new shape with a deep body

90 Review: CEntrance MixerFace R4
A battery-powered recording interface for laptops and mobile devices

91 Review: CloudVocal iSolo Choice
Wireless microphone system for recording and live performance

MIXED MEDIA

92 Playlist
Mandolin Orange's quietly compelling folk-Americana; David Crosby's "solo" album is a collective effort

98 Great Acoustics
1959 Guild M-20



ARTIST SERIES

AN ALVAREZ CLASSIC, OUR ABT60 IS THE BEST VALUE BARITONE ON THE MARKET. THE ABT60ESHB OFFERS A WONDERFUL LIVE ACOUSTIC ELECTRIC EXPERIENCE WITH A SOLID SITKA SPRUCE TOP IN A STUNNING SHADOWBURST FINISH.

ABT60ESHB



When we first released the ABT60 Acoustic Baritone in the mid 2000s we had no idea it would become one of our best sellers. Players love the new deep registers they can achieve with this instrument and also find joy and inspiration composing and playing old favorites with the ABT60's unique voice. As with all Alvarez guitars, we have devoted ourselves to delivering our instruments at incredible value and the ABT60 is no exception as one of the highest value and most affordable Baritone guitars on the market today.

Alvarez®

alvarezguitars.com

SPONSORED

INTERMEDIATE FINGERPICKING PATTERN



Guitarist and composer Chris Woods of The Chris Woods Groove Orchestra takes you step by step through an intermediate fingerpicking pattern. Using two very simple open dream-like chords and a repetitive picking pattern this lesson is an opportunity to focus on detail and bring some serious magic into your picking. Taking fingerpicking away from being a process and into something that is alive with dynamic color.

Chris uses a Martin 000x1 with a mimesis kudos pickup always strung with Elixir® Acoustic Phosphor Bronze Strings with NANOWEB® Coating Light/Medium Gauge. These strings provide a rich and full tone and a smooth feel.

Elixir Strings provides three string types in its acoustic line, all with tone that lasts and lasts and lasts.

Learn more:
AcousticGuitar.com/Sponsored

Elixir® STRINGS

SPONSORED

AG ONLINE

acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019

Video Exclusives



RECORD YOURSELF
From gear and apps to tracking to editing to mastering, Doug Young breaks down the basics of capturing your music. (p. 30)



GRAND PACIFICS
Two all-new V-braced beauties from Taylor. (p.84)



'THE CHOICE WIFE'
Al Petteway plays through a Celtic classic. (p. 45)



HOW TO USE HARMONICS
Add interest and texture to your playing. (p. 48)

AcousticGuitar.com facebook.com/acousticguitarmagazine
instagram.com/acousticguitarmag twitter.com/AcousticGuitar_

DOWNLOAD THIS MAGAZINE – FOR FREE!

On the run and forgot to pack your magazine? Spend time at the computer and want to scroll through at your leisure? Then download our PDF version of this issue today and enjoy the benefits of a digital edition.

Visit **store.AcousticGuitar.com/digital-edition**, select this issue, then enter the code **MA315FR** when you check out to get your version for free!



SAVE BIG ON VIDEO LESSONS, SONGBOOKS & MORE

Every Friday at Noon, *AG* sends a special Acoustic Guitar Deal to thousands of guitarists like you. Recent Deals include the *Acoustic Guitar Fingerstyle Method* for 50% off and a $9 offer on *Inside Blues Guitar*. Sign up today so you don't miss out on a deal again.
acousticguitar.com/deals

AMSTERJAM

While traveling in Europe for my 40th anniversary, I was concerned about losing my calluses, so in each city I would search for guitar shops to "doodle" in. While in Amsterdam, I stumbled into an old-time music store with three floors. The bottom floor, the acoustic section, had stools to sit on, so I was a happy guy. Very shortly, a couple of other players were doing the same thing, so I started playing "House of the Rising Sun" (which to me is almost every player's first song). Sure enough, three, then four, then seven-plus people were all playing along. This encouraged a mini jam: drummers, flutes, mandos, etc., were rockin' out! Some store personnel even joined in. Even though this event occurred 12 years ago and I can't recall the store's name, it was one of those special music moments of people sharing the power and joy of music.

—George Arthur, Hixson, TN

DON'T GIVE UP

You had mentioned you'd like us, your readers, to send in our ideas for future articles. One that might be interesting is what players can do to keep playing after injuries, loss of dexterity, arthritis, or any number of other ailments. Well, tell them not to stop, to find a way somehow; cheat like hell. For example, to play a G chord, only hold down the high E string at the third fret, and pay no attention to the rest of the chord—just strum the D, G, B, and E strings. I knew a guy who had lost the index finger on his right hand, so he held his pick between thumb and middle finger. Remember Django Reinhardt?

Personally, because of arthritis, a proper G7 chord is impossible. I can't stretch three frets, so (you're gonna love this one) I took the E and A strings off my Baby Taylor, and have run the D, G, B, and E strings down the middle four slots of the nut. Hey, it works . . . Also, same principle for the G7 chord: just hold down the E string at the first fret and strum away. C chord, two strings to fret; Em chord, one string; D stays the same, and so on. I might not back up Clapton, but it works for me. The key, no pun intended, is to keep playing!

—Gord Lefort, via internet

TRADING PLACES

I could not agree more with Andy McKenzie's letter (December 2018) pertaining to supporting your local trader. I have to say, for me, there are things in life you simply have to examine in person. Whether a good pair of walking boots or an acoustic guitar, there will never be any substitute for looking at them in person, holding them, and picking the brains of a knowledgeable merchant. That applies to all musical instruments. No image shown online, and then ordered via courier, will ever compete with what your local guitar shop can provide.

—Stephen Parry, England, UK

CORRECTION

The February 2019 feature on Joni Mitchell mentioned her guitar part on the 2007 recording of "Big Yellow Taxi." She did not actually play guitar on the track; she used a keyboard simulation of a guitar.

We want to hear from you! Share at Editors.AG@Stringletter.com and facebook.com/AcousticGuitarMagazine



ACOUSTIC GUITAR
ACOUSTICGUITAR.COM

HOW TO CONNECT WITH ACOUSTIC GUITAR

ARTISTS AND AGENTS
Need to submit recordings for coverage or review? Please send e-mail to Editors.AG@Stringletter.com and/or review copies to Acoustic Guitar Playlist, 501 Canal Blvd., Suite J, Richmond, CA 94804.

BUSINESSES
Contact our Finance & Operations team by sending e-mail to AdminDept@Stringletter.com.

MARKETERS
Need to connect with more than 800,000 guitarists in *Acoustic Guitar* magazine and on our digital platforms? Call Ref Sanchez, Advertising Manager, at (510) 215-0037 or send e-mail to Sales@Stringletter.com.

Need to submit products for coverage or review? Please send e-mail to Editors.AG@Stringletter.com.

READERS
Have a question, comment, or suggestion for *Acoustic Guitar*'s editors? Send e-mail to Editors.AG@Stringletter.com or snail mail to Editor, Acoustic Guitar, 501 Canal Blvd., Suite J, Richmond, CA 94804.

Want to subscribe? Call (800) 827-6837 or visit AcousticGuitar.com/Subscribe.

Need to renew, pay a bill, change an address, give a gift, or get answers to your questions about a subscription? Visit AcousticGuitar.com/Subscriber-Services.

Want help with a purchase on our online store? E-mail AcousticGuitarService@Stringletter.com.

RETAILERS
Want to regularly receive free copies of *Acoustic Guitar* for yourself, your staff, and your store? Visit Stringletter.com/Retailers.

WRITERS
Want to contribute to *Acoustic Guitar*? Send your story idea and recently published writing samples to Editors.AG@Stringletter.com.

EVERYONE
Mail & Shipping: 501 Canal Blvd., Suite J, Richmond, CA 94804
Front Desk: (510) 215-0010
Customer Service: (800) 827-6837
General Fax: (510) 231-5824
Secure Fax: (510) 231-8964

Printed in USA

Except where otherwise noted, all contents © String Letter Publishing, Inc, David A. Lusterman, Publisher.

string letter media
Stringletter.com

THE FRONT PORCH

Alan Lomax



THE ALAN LOMAX COLLECTION AT THE AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR CULTURAL EQUITY

Ladies and gentlemen, meet the new and improved bimonthly version of *Acoustic Guitar* magazine, retooled with your many suggestions and comments very much in mind.

As I mentioned in my last Front Porch column, *Acoustic Guitar* readers have been very vocal about what you expect in each issue. Overwhelmingly, you asked for more songs to play, with a distinct emphasis on the music of iconic singer-songwriters and rock, pop, blues, and country artists and bands.

We also heard from flatpickers who feel underserved, beginners and lefties who need more advice, gigging musicians curious about the experiences of their peers, players who can't learn enough about luthiers and their craft, and many more. We aren't attempting to satisfy every request in this issue, but we'll certainly give it a shot over the long haul. And please keep in touch so we'll always know what you're looking for.

For now, here's a brief rundown on the music you'll find in this first bimonthly issue:

Two *Acoustic Classic* songs to play—Fleetwood Mac's "Landslide" and Nick Drake's "Pink Moon," both with expanded introductions about the original recording sessions, plus performance notes, fully transcribed melodies, solos, riffs, and accompaniments, along with chords and rhythm patterns.

We're kicking off *Pickin',* the new regular department for flatpickers, with the classic "Whiskey Before Breakfast" as recorded by Norman Blake. Look for more great tunes from the roots, bluegrass, country, and swing repertoire in future issues.

Beginners will likely gather at the *Campfire*, where we share a tune that's stood the test of time and belongs on every player's songlist. Where better to start than with "Home on the Range"?

Looking for brand new material to add to your set lists? *World Premiere* offers a fully transcribed and tabbed piece that has never appeared in print before, beginning with Buck Curran's evocative "Song for Liam."

Now you can learn a song from one of the recordings we review in the Mixed Media section at the back of the issue in the new *From the Playlist* department, starting with "Golden Embers" from the latest Mandolin Orange release, *Tides of a Teardrop*. And be sure to check out our long-running *Woodshed* department, where we break down a fingerstyle piece with detailed advice on how to learn it and play it, starting with Al Petteway's arrangement of Celtic classic, "The Choice Wife."

That's the music lineup for this issue. You'll also find reviews of the new Collings C100, Taylor's Grand Pacific models, the CEntrance MixerFace R4, and the CloudVocal iSolo Choice; visits with string maker Jim D'Addario and guitarist Eric Skye; a profile of the pioneering song collector and field-recording innovator Alan Lomax; advice on how to build chords, understand harmonics, and choose bridge pins; plus, a special section on recording yourself and marketing your music.

As always, let me know how we're doing—and how we can serve you better.

—David A. Lusterman
David.Lusterman@Stringletter.com

AG COMMUNITY

Heartfelt thanks to all the guitarists–over 850,000 of you who read the magazine, visit our website, subscribe to our email newsletters, and follow us on social media–who make Acoustic Guitar *possible. With special thanks to our staff and contributors, our advertisers, and our sustaining subscribers (who pay a premium price to support our work and community).*

OUR TEAM

David A. Lusterman
Editor

Kevin Owens
Managing Editor

Greg Olwell
Senior Editor

Blair Jackson
Senior Editor

Adam Perlmutter
Music Editor

Jeffrey Pepper Rodgers
Editor at Large

Hugh O'Connor
Production Manager

Joey Lusterman
Creative Director

Bill Evans
Art Director

Lyzy Lusterman
Chief Revenue Officer

Amy-lynn Fischer
Group Sales Manager

Ref Sanchez
Sales Manager

Vanessa Averbeck
Sales Associate

Tanya Gonzalez
Marketing Services Manager

Kelsey Holt
Product Marketing Manager

Lauren Boyd
Subscription Marketing Manager

Gaby Garcia
Customer Service Representative

Tom Ferruggia
Single Copy Sales Consultant

Anita Evans
Chief Operations Officer

Geneva Thompson
Bookkeeper

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Adam Levy
Bill Leigh
Brian Wise
Danny Carnahan
David Hamburger
David Hodge
David McPherson
Derk Richardson
Donn Jones
Doug Young
E.E. Bradman
Eddie Scher
Erin McKeown
Greg Cahill
Gretchen Menn
James DePrato
Jamie Stillway
Jane Miller
Kate Koenig
Kenny Berkowitz
Kimo Ball
Lee Zimmerman
Mac Randall
Mamie Minch
Mark Small
Mary Flower
Maurice Tani
Michael Wright
Muriel Anderson
Nathan Salsburg
Nick Millevoi
Olivia Wise
Pat Moran
Paul Geller
Paul Mehling
Pauline France
Pete Madsen
Richard Johnston
Robert L. Doerschuk
Ronald Jackson
Sean McGowan
Steve James
Tim Bertsch
Tony Marcus

OUR ADVERTISERS

Acoustic Connections
Acoustic Remedy Cases
Alfred Music
American Music Furniture
AMI Musical Instruments
Andrew White Guitars
Armadillo Enterprises
Artisan Guitar Show
ArtistWorks, Inc.
Ashokan Fiddle & Dance Workshop
Audio Sprockets
Bose Corporation
Bourgeois Guitars
Boveda
Bread & Roses
Breezy Ridge Instruments
C. F. Martin & Co.
California Coast Music Camp
Centrum Foundation
CGP Sounds
CloudVocal International
Collings Guitars
Córdoba Guitars
Creative Tunings
CruzTools
D'Addario & Company
Dream Catcher Events
Eastman
Elixir Strings
Elliott Capos
Fender
Fishman
G7th
Genzler Amplification
Grace Designs
Greg Brandt
Guitar Center
Guitar Foundation Of America
Guitar Salon International
Guitar Shop Tees
Guitars in the Classroom
Guptill Music
Hal Leonard
Hamre Music
Henriksen
Honz Technology
Hoshino USA
KHS America
Kopf Percussion
Korg Synthesizers and Tuners
Kyser Musical Products
LR Baggs
Masterwriter
Menucha Retreat & Conference Center
Mule Resophonic Guitars
Nettwerk Music Group
Orange Music Electronic Co.
Original Guitar Chair
P. K. Thompson Guitars
Paul Reed Smith Guitars
Pepperdine University
Phoenix Guitar Company
Radial Engineering
RainSong Graphite Guitars
Ramirez Guitars
Red Wing Roots Music Festival
ROI Rocket
Sam Ash Music Stores
School of Rock
SFM
Shubb Capos
Sisters Folk Festival
Solid Ground Stands
St. Louis Music
Steven Kaufman
Sunnaudio
Sweetwater Sound
Taylor-Listug
Teronus
The Swannanoa Gathering
TKL World Class Cases
Two Old Hippies
USA Songwriting Competition
Walnut Valley Association
Woodstock Invitational
Yamaha Corporation of America

OUR SUSTAINING SUBSCRIBERS
(as of January 3)

Carl Halladay
Christopher McKillop
Constance Sorrell
Don Marrah
Douglas Broadie
Eyvind Elgesem
Gary Glaser
Geoffrey Marlow
Glen McCarthy
James Pearson
Jay Shapiro
Jeff McMoyler
John Mihalik
John Wagner
Mark Berker
Max Obermiller
Peter McLaughlin
Ralph Davis
Richard Philyaw
Richard Nangle
Rick Krahn
Robert W Lucas
Ron Hoffman
Ron McEwan
Sarah Hupcey
Stephen Simpson
Steven Clancy
Steven Lifson
Thomas Hoehner
Timothy Eno



©2019 Fender Musical Instruments Corporation. FENDER, FENDER in script, TELECASTER and the distinctive headstock commonly found on Fender guitars and basses are registered trademarks of FMIC. Acoustasonic is a trademark of FMIC. All rights reserved.


ACOUSTIC. ELECTRIC.
EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.
UNLOCK NEW SOUNDS WITH THE AMERICAN ACOUSTASONIC™ TELECASTER.®
Fender®
CRAFTED IN CORONA, CALIFORNIA



GUY BROOKSBANK

One-Guitar Man

Eric Skye on intentional limitations and the blues

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

Ten or so years ago, the steel-string guitarist Eric Skye was hanging out at Gryphon Stringed Instruments in Palo Alto, California, putting a Santa Cruz guitar through its paces, when a stranger approached him to compliment his musicianship. As it happened, that stranger, Willie Carter, worked in artist relations at the Santa Cruz Guitar Company, and a fortuitous connection was instantly formed.

"Willie just said, 'You really need to come to Santa Cruz to meet Richard Hoover,'" Skye says, referring to the guitar company's beloved owner. "Of course I jumped at the opportunity. I went down there, ended up playing for the whole crew, and just really hit it off with everyone. I became an official Santa Cruz artist on the spot."

Skye is among a handful of artists to have been honored with a SCGC signature model. Since its introduction in 2011, he has used the guitar exclusively when straddling the worlds of fingerpicking and flatpicking—in traditional acoustic and more adventurous jazz contexts—which he does with apparent effortlessness. The instrument assumes a central role on his latest album, *Ballads and Blues*, a collection of standards and originals arranged inventively for solo guitar.

Calling from his home studio in Portland, Oregon, Skye sang the praises of his namesake guitar and examined the methodology behind his recent work.

You've been playing your signature Santa Cruz exclusively for years now. How did the model come about?

Around 2010, Richard Hoover called and asked me if I would be interested in doing a signature-model guitar. It was like getting a call from Steve Jobs! Santa Cruz had already made me a standard 00 with an Adirondack top, and that's all I was playing at that point, so it had to be another 00. Richard asked me what further customizations I would want, and we ended up messing around with scale length and string spacing, settling on 1-13/16 inches for the left hand [nut], 2-1/4 inches for the right hand [saddle], and a scale length of 24.9 inches—just a skosh longer than the Gibson short-scale.

The guitar is also a quarter-inch deeper than the standard 00, which gives it a little bit more low end. Another key thing was the use of cocobolo [for the back and sides], which is a very heavy and dense wood that I find projects well, making it very easy to use with a microphone.

How many examples of the model do you own?

Just two—the original, number one, with the Adirondack top, and number two, which has an Italian spruce top. I told Richard I was looking for bear claw-figured Italian spruce—something that would make a good conversation piece. He found

the most beautiful board when he was in Europe, and brought it back to make me another guitar.

Do you notice much of a difference between the two instruments? How do you decide which one to use?
I'm not sure I would be able to distinguish them in a blind listening test, but if pressed I'd say that maybe the Italian spruce has a little more note separation and definition. But they're really so similar that I tend to use the one with the freshest strings at the moment [*laughs*].

Are the guitars equipped with pickups?
The production model doesn't come with electronics, but I do have K&K pickups installed, just as an emergency backup. When I perform, I like to use an AKG C214 large-diaphragm condenser mic—or whatever is provided by the house if I'm on the road and don't feel like bringing a microphone. Also, because I do a lot of house concerts, for under 50 people or so, a lot of times I just sit up straight and use my fingerpicks without any amplification at all. That's my preference.

Many guitarists have stables of instruments, but you have just two. Why is that?
I actually think of it as one guitar! There are a couple of answers: One is I think I finally found "the one." Richard and I went through this intense process of whittling things down to exactly what I need a guitar to do, and it really covers everything. I can be my fingerstyle best on it, and also do flatpicking, alone or with a group. And as I've gotten older, I've realized that I function better as a creative person with limitations. It's like I'm a pianist with just one piano in the house. I can focus more of my time and attention on what's on the music stand in front of me. It's ultimately about intentional limitation.

I saw a great picture you posted on Facebook recently of a grunge-era Eric Skye playing a Gibson ES-335. Why have you found yourself ultimately more drawn to the acoustic guitar than the electric, especially as a jazz guitarist?
I actually think of myself more as an acoustic guitarist who plays jazz than a jazz guitarist who plays acoustic. Within that lens, I liken myself to an acoustic piano player. I do like the sound of an electric jazz guitar—like an ES-175, that compressed humbucker kind of sound. But I think of the ES-175 like a Fender Rhodes, something that I would not want to hear a whole album of by itself.

On the other hand, I've always been attracted to that acoustic-piano overtone kind of sound you can get on a great acoustic guitar, and it probably goes back to growing up in the Bay Area in the early '80s. It's just being around that sort of California guitar style, that Alex de Grassi kind of influence that I identified with, so it made sense to just carry that through everything I do. I don't need a jazz guitar to play jazz or a bluegrass guitar to play bluegrass or a classical guitar to play classical. Those are just styles; they're not necessarily sounds.

I'm guessing you don't consider yourself a blues guitarist, either, but that style features prominently in your work, especially on *Ballads and Blues*. What does the blues mean to you?
The blues is obviously a noun. It's a thing, it's a structure—a three-chord structure, all being dominant chords, etc. But it's also a verb, the sort of cathartic experience of making music. Other places in the world have music that's very different than what we think of as American blues, but are similar in spirit and process. Flamenco comes to mind, for example.



'I don't need a jazz guitar to play jazz or a bluegrass guitar to play bluegrass or a classical guitar to play classical.'

In any case, I went through a period of discovering the great electric blues guitarists—players like the three Kings: Freddie, Albert, and B.B.—and then I got into funkier blues, like the later Grant Green stuff. In all of those things, what appeals to me most is digging in deep and being expressive in the moment, so I try to bring that into whatever I do.

Talk about how you put the album together.
The idea was to play blues tunes that all had some little twist to them. Take [McCoy Tyner's] "Contemplation," for example: It's a minor blues and it's a waltz and it's 16 bars. Or [Charles Mingus'] "Nostalgia in Times Square"—it's kind of a 12-bar blues, but harmonically you have to put on a lens to understand that it's a twist on the blues. I've always liked that kind of thing.

As for the ballads, in slow tunes you're obviously called upon to play expressively. When you play something fast and busy, you're showing the world what you can do. But when you play slowly, you're showing who you really are, and it's kind of a big responsibility. The fewer the notes, the harder it is, as far as I'm concerned. So, in a lot of ways those ballads are really bluesy, too, in the verb sense. What I think ties the whole album together is me trying to dig deep, play in the moment, and be sincere.

Why do you find it more difficult to play slowly than to shred?
It's trickier to keep the groove in the pocket; when the tempo's faster it's doing some of that work for you. When it's slow, the beats are, of course, spaced further apart, and it becomes harder to predict where the next beat is. I also think it's harder because the older I get, the more sparsely I try to play. I used to try to make a lot of big chords and complicated bass lines, but now I don't feel any obligation to do any of that.

I think a lot of it is the nakedness of the notes just being out there. I'm really listening to the whole bloom of the note and making sure it has a nice tail on the end of it, that nothing's getting cut off. You have to be inside every note, and that takes a lot of intention.

How did you make that transformation where you're less concerned about complexity?
Like I said, it's a function of getting older—and maybe having less testosterone [*laughs*]. I would also say it comes from making music with Mark Goldenberg, who only plays the great notes. Sometimes there are a lot of them and sometimes there are very few of them, but none of that registers to him. He's just a composer who happens to be playing the guitar. Being around Mark the last few years has obviously been a huge influence.

Have you ever talked with him about his tendency to only play the great stuff, or has his example just kind of rubbed off on you?
I'm thinking it's just through osmosis—from being right there in the cockpit with him when we perform and record together. We've spent a lot of days in cars, driving to gigs, but most of the time we've just talked about our kids and stuff like that. Mainly he has just been encouraging. I remember telling him what my practice regimen was like and, although he was just trying to be funny and off-the-cuff, he said something that became a mantra for me: "Stop trying to become a better guitar player and just write the music." **AG**

Southern Guitar Journeys

Folklorist Alan Lomax and his treasure trove of steel-string discoveries

BY NATHAN SALSBURG



(From left): Sonny Terry, Woody Guthrie, Lily Mae Ledford, Alan Lomax. New York City, c. 1944

Folklorist Alan Lomax is primarily recognized, when at all, by the instrumental role he played in launching the careers of some America's—and the world's—most beloved guitarist-singers. Indeed, it's difficult to overestimate the role that he and his father, John A. Lomax, played in shaping musical history as they traveled the back roads of the southern United States collecting traditional music under the auspices of the Library of Congress between 1933 and 1942 (and, in Alan's case, independently well into the 1980s).

The Lomaxes first met and recorded Huddie Ledbetter, better known as Lead Belly, at Louisiana's Angola Penitentiary in 1933, and legend endures that it was a Lomax-recorded disc of a Ledbetter "pardon song" to Governor O.K. Allen that won the singer's parole. While there's no conclusive evidence of this, it's a fact that Lead Belly's most famous song, "Goodnight Irene," learned from an uncle, played a foundational part in the repertoire and reach of the burgeoning folk revival of the 1940s. His version of "Rock Island Line," learned from a convict named Kelley Pace at the Cummins State Farm in Arkansas, was adapted in 1954 by English skiffle pioneer Lonnie Donegan, launching that particular craze, which in its part helped spawn the British Invasion. Brian Eno has said that "without Alan Lomax it's possible that there would have been no blues explosion, no R&B movement, no Beatles and no Stones and no Velvet Underground." Without Lead Belly's influence, this might not be confidently said.

In 1941, Lomax, along with the sociologist Lewis Jones and the musicologist John W. Work III, made the debut recordings of a young blues player named McKinley Morganfield—who went by the handle Muddy Water (the "s" seems to have been an accidental appendage of Lomax's)—at the Stovall Plantation in



PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN, ALL OTHER PHOTOS FROM THE ALAN LOMAX COLLECTION AT THE AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR CULTURAL EQUITY

Coahoma County, Mississippi. Lomax had two of these pieces, "Country Blues" and "I Be's Troubled," on which Waters sang and played acoustic guitar, released on the first album of the Library of Congress' new "Archive of Folk Song" series the following year, and he sent several sets to Waters.

"He brought his stuff down and recorded me right in my house," Waters later recalled to *Rolling Stone*, "and when he played back the first song I sounded just like anybody's records. Man, you don't know how I felt that Saturday afternoon when I heard that voice and it was my own voice. Later on he sent me two copies of the pressing and a check for 20 bucks, and I carried that record up to the corner and put it on the jukebox. Just played it and played it and said, 'I can do it, I can do it.'" Not long after Lomax came back in July 1942 to record him further, Morganfield left Stovall for Chicago, and the rest is history.

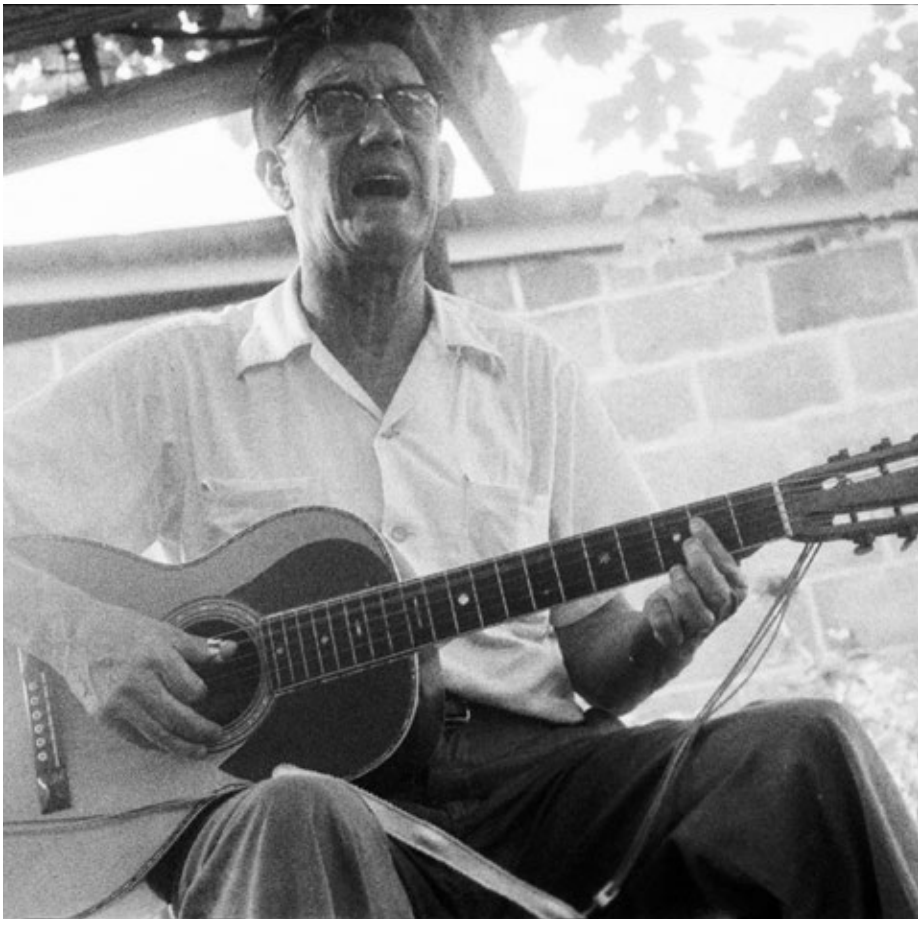
Woodrow Wilson Guthrie and Alan Lomax were introduced at a 1940 concert in New York City's Town Hall benefiting the doomed Republicans in the Spanish Civil War. Woody's canny persona, combining hayseed philosopher with populist radical, and his brilliant and pithy topical songs—far, far superior to the propagandistic pap that Alan and most of his progressive folkie friends in New York were coming up with—won Lomax over completely. The pair soon set up at the Library of Congress for some three hours of recording.

Guthrie soon picked up an amanuensis in young Jack Elliott, who had his own indelible influence on young Bobby Dylan, recently arrived from Minnesota. Between Jack and Woody, and hours spent at Lomax's West Third Street apartment listening to Alan's copy of Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music*, Dylan mined more than enough of the raw materials he needed to steer (before, of course, spurning) the New York folk scene into mainstream consciousness.

And one of the greatest discoveries of Lomax's seven-decade career was made in September 1959 outside the North Mississippi town of Como, at the home of two septuagenarian African-American brothers named Miles and Bob Pratcher. During a session with the Pratchers, a neighboring farmer in overalls appeared on the porch carrying a guitar. The brilliant English folk-singer Shirley Collins, Lomax's then-girlfriend and assistant, recalls that in the midst of the wonderful and very nearly obsolete old black country dance tunes that Miles and Bob had played on fiddle and guitar, this younger visitor seemed an intrusion. But when he started to play, she and Lomax realized they were in the presence of a monumental artist, who, as "Mississippi" Fred McDowell, would put the deep drone blues of the Mississippi Hill Country on the musical map.

Lomax was first a folklorist, and his interest, indeed his obsession, was seeking out and documenting artists whose repertoires and performance styles represented local traditions and tastes.

"I look at it this way," McDowell later told *Sing Out!*, "If you've got a gift, you do that, you don't know what may turn up in your favor." It was a gift that sent him around the world to perform, and it was represented on more than a dozen albums between 1960 and 1972, when he died in Memphis. A year earlier the Rolling Stones had covered his "You Got to Move" on their *Sticky Fingers* album. The Stones "made much of him," Lomax later remarked. They "wined and dined him and bought him a silver lamé suit, which he wore home to Como and was buried in, for he died soon after, much reduced by the life that fame and fortune had too late introduced him to."



Hobart Smith. Bluefield, Virginia, August 1959

FIRST A FOLKLORIST

If these recordings were all Alan Lomax had to his credit, well, like Jews say on Passover, *dayenu*: It would have been enough. But professional musicians—to say nothing of famous professional musicians—make up a fraction of a fraction of the performers in Lomax's collections. He recorded an extraordinary number of artists, well into the thousands, and the vast majority of them were utterly amateur. This is, of course, not to denigrate their abilities, but is to say that that Lomax was first a folklorist, and his interest, indeed his obsession, was seeking out and documenting artists whose repertoires and performance styles represented local traditions and tastes, preferably (although not by any means exclusively) learned through the oral tradition, as opposed to popular culture via the radio or phonograph records.

That said, Lomax didn't, and likely couldn't, stop there. His boosterism clawed its way into the very centralized media channels that he

fretted were crushing these site-specific performance traditions. He produced records for the Columbia, Decca, Atlantic, and Prestige labels; he wrote, produced, and hosted radio shows over CBS, the Mutual Broadcasting System, and the BBC, and late in his career, a six-part television series for PBS called *American Patchwork*, focusing on still-thriving regional folkways in the American South. He saw his work as essentially activism, animated by the concept of what he called "cultural equity." As he explained to Charles Kuralt in a 1991 interview: "Cultural equity should join all the other important principles of human dignity, freedom of speech, freedom of movement, freedom to work and live and enjoy yourself, and freedom for your culture to express itself."

It was this sort of nascent progressive orientation that compelled Lomax to decamp to Europe for most of the 1950s, where he made recordings throughout Britain, Ireland, Italy, and Spain, and escaped the heat of Senator Joseph McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee (which had blacklisted his friends Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie). Returning in 1958 to New York City, he found an urban folk revival in full swing. Crowds of young banjo players, guitarists, fiddlers, and fans were gathering in Washington Square Park to pick and sing traditional songs and tunes, many of which Lomax had recorded decades earlier from the likes of Woody and Lead Belly.

But Lomax had misgivings. Years later, in a passage that is now available in *Alan Lomax: Selected Writings, 1934–1997*, he wrote, "Some of the young folkniks, who dominated the New York scene, asserted that there was more folk music in Washington Square on Sunday afternoon than there was in all rural America. Apparently, it made them feel like heroes to believe that they were keeping a dying tradition alive. The idea that these nice young people, who were only just beginning to learn how to play and sing in good style, might replace the glories of the real thing, frankly horrified me."

It was also in 1958 that the Kingston Trio had a number-one *Billboard* hit with "Tom Dooley," based on a version of the murder ballad recorded by North Carolina banjo player and singer Frank Proffitt in 1940. The group exemplified the emergence of "folk music" as a commercial genre and its lucrative possibilities. Their squeaky-clean and bowdlerized traditional standards were almost incomprehensibly popular, and worlds away from the performances captured by the Lomaxes "in the field."

As a child, I thrilled to the Lomax recording of "Railroad Bill," a song that perhaps more than any other became a testing-ground for revivalist guitar-pickers in Washington Square and elsewhere. It was one that could be traced back to Southwestern Virginia and a staggeringly gifted multi-instrumentalist named Hobart Smith, whom Lomax first met in 1942. Along with his ballad-singing sister Texas Gladden, Smith would be the very first person Alan visited on his famous "Southern Journey" field-recording trip in 1959—an attempt, and a successful one, to prove that American folk music was not just surviving but thriving in its native habitats.

Annie Mae and Fred McDowell. Como, Mississippi, September 1959



GUITAR ORIGINALS

In some circles Hobart Smith is talked about in the same reverential tones as Dock Boggs or Clarence Ashley. Listeners first encountering their 1920s recordings on Harry Smith's *Anthology* were hit with the force of revelation; in the case of folklorists Mike Seeger and Ralph Rinzler, they sought them out and introduced them as stars on folk revival stages in the 1960s. Hobart never cut any sides for the prewar commercial companies (although he did tour with Ashley on the medicine-show circuit in the late teens), and was instead first documented by Alan Lomax at Virginia's White Top Folk Festival in 1942.

A master on fiddle, banjo, piano, and guitar, Smith's repertoire was an exquisite collection of country dance tunes, breakdowns, sacred songs, ballads, and blues; the latter of which—"K.C. Blues," "Brownskin Blues," and "Graveyard Blues" among them—he played on an acoustic guitar (with metal fingerpicks, as he bit his nails) in a style picked up from African-American laborers in the salt industry that gave Saltville its name, or the often-itinerant railroad workers in the town's black community, Smoky Row.

One of those players was an albino by the name of Bob Campbell. As Smith described him to his banjo student and later recordist Fleming Brown in 1963, he was a "great big tall fellow. His eyes would just dance in his head when he played that 'Railroad Bill.' And of all my traveling since . . . of all the men I ever heard play it, I've never heard a man could beat Bob Campbell playing 'Railroad Bill.' Ah, he was wonderful. Ain't no question about that." It's Smith's version of "Railroad Bill"—first released by Asch Records in 1946—that took the folk revival by storm. In researcher Stephen Wade's words, "to be able to play it was a mark of expertise."

Rosa Lee Hill. Como, Mississippi, September 1959



After meeting him again in 1959, Lomax tried hard to get Smith involved with the revival, as did others, like the New Lost City Ramblers' Mike Seeger and John Cohen. Appearances at a Friends of Old Time Music concert in NYC and the 1964 Newport Folk Festival helped spread his reputation, but the money wasn't much of a supplement to his old-age pension, and Smith's health was failing. He died in 1965, unable—like Boggs, Ashley or other Lomax-promoted tradition-bearers like Bessie Jones or Fred McDowell—to profit from the revival that owed so much to his music.

Just after his 1959 sessions with Smith, Lomax went to visit another singular guitarist in Southwestern Virginia, this one in the tiny mountain hamlet of Rugby. Estil Cortez Ball was one of America's greatest arrangers, composers, and singers of country gospel, but despite his religious fervor he'd still play ballads, blues, rags, and play-party songs in his signature three-finger style. Ball could one minute perform his bona fide country gospel classic, "Tribulations"—a truly terrifying account of the Book of Revelation, which he first recorded for Lomax in 1959 (and which has been covered by scads of singers as "Trials, Troubles, Tribulations")—and launch into the nonsense ditty "Jennie Jenkins" the next. He made his first recordings in 1937 for John Lomax at the Old Fiddlers' Convention in Galax, Virginia; Alan visited him in 1942 and 1959 for more.

Ball's extensive recorded output (he made several records for the Rounder label and was a prolific home-recordist) is a corrective of a kind to the notion that Appalachian music is all high-lonesome singing and turbo banjo-frailing. His voice was deep and sonorous, his picking frequently complex but always relaxed; even when playing one of his own magical instrumentals, a raggy tune like "Walkin' the Wires," he does it with such mellow ease as to make Sam McGee sound manic. Perhaps it was E.C. Ball's day jobs that made his music sound that way—he ran a service station and drove a school bus, two occupations requiring patience and a gentle touch. No doubt his deep religiosity and commitment to spreading the gospel of Christianity inspired a certain forbearance in him. But most likely, like the best of artists, "folk" or otherwise, the music he made was just a reflection of who he was—in his case, thoughtful, diligent, and honest, with severity, gentleness, and humor in equal measure—shaped by his time and place.

WE'RE JUST CULTURE

We have thus far given grievously short shrift to women. Lomax conducted extensive sessions with many brilliant female singers—first among them the trifecta of Bessie Jones, Vera Ward Hall, and Texas Gladden in the States; Ireland's great Margaret Barry (who was also a mean banjo strummer); Scotland's ballad queen Jeannie Robertson; and a young Haitian woman identified only as Francilia, whom Lomax ostensibly hired as a housekeeper (though she couldn't keep house) just to be able to record her huge trove of ceremonial Vodou songs.

But female guitarists are a relative rarity in the collections. The one who leaves perhaps the most indelible impression is Rosa Lee Hill of Como, Mississippi—despite her having played just two songs for Lomax's tape machine. Hill was the daughter of the sublime musical patriarch of the Mississippi Hill Country, Sid Hemphill, whom Alan had first met in 1942. During an interview with Hemphill then, Lomax asked how many instruments he played. "Well," replied Hemphill, "I don't know, hardly, lemme see: play guitar, fiddle, mandolin, snare drum, feist [fife], bass drum, quills, banjo, pretty good organ player."

Lomax met and recorded Hemphill for the last time in 1959, at which time he also sat

ESSENTIAL LISTENING



E.C. Ball

Through the Years, 1937-1975



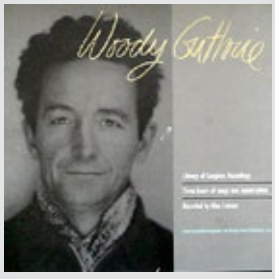
Lead Belly

The Smithsonian Folkways Collection



Hobart Smith

Blue Ridge Legacy



Woody Guthrie

The Library of Congress Recordings



Fred McDowell

The Alan Lomax Recordings



Muddy Waters

The Complete Plantation Recordings

'Without Alan Lomax it's possible that there would have been no blues explosion, no R&B movement, no Beatles and no Stones, and no Velvet Underground.'

–BRIAN ENO

down with Hill. Growing up under his tutelage and in a community thick with songs and dances, she had been a fixture at musical occasions like country frolics and picnics. As she told George Mitchell (who thankfully recorded a few more of her songs in 1967): "Everybody in my family played. My mother, my daddy, my aunties, and my grandpa played, all my cousins and sisters played. The whole Hemphill band played music—all of 'em."

The Hill Country's guitar blues, as heard in Fred McDowell's first recordings in 1959, remained acoustic for much longer than other regions, as it was poorer and more isolated than the Delta to the west and southwest. (To look in the other direction, the acoustic guitar began eclipsing the banjo as the Delta's most popular stringed instrument around 1900. As one Clarksdale oldster told Lomax in 1942 about those changing tastes of local musicians: "They thought they was progressing.") And despite being categorized as a "blueswoman," Rosa Lee Hill sounds like more of a great-grandmother of the blues, embodying the hypnotic modal drone of the region's traditions better than nearly anyone besides McDowell, and anticipating the electric trance boogie of R. L. Burnside and Junior Kimbrough that would refocus attention on the Hill Country decades later. Sadly, like Hobart Smith, Hill died before her time in 1968.

These guitarists were certainly not famous. They were instead deeply gifted craftspeople who succeeded in deftly reconciling collective traditions with individual artistries, and who created bodies of work (in some cases woefully slim) that were entirely their own. In that they are representatives of the greater galaxy of the Lomax recordings, and of the whole surround of traditional expressive culture that serves as a testament to the tremendous diversity of human identity and experience. And in this, deserving of popular attention, respect, and support at large. As Lomax told Charles Kuralt, "'Cause that's all we got, you know. We're just culture."
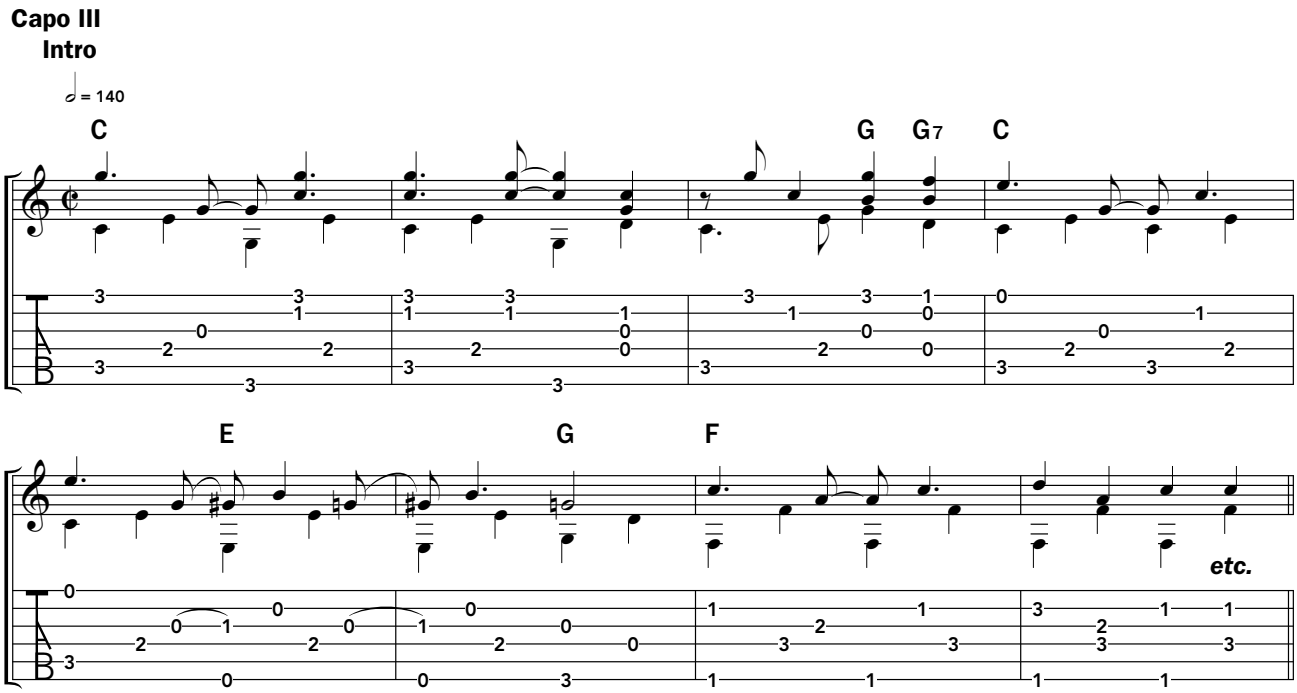
John Dudley. Parchman Farm, September 1959



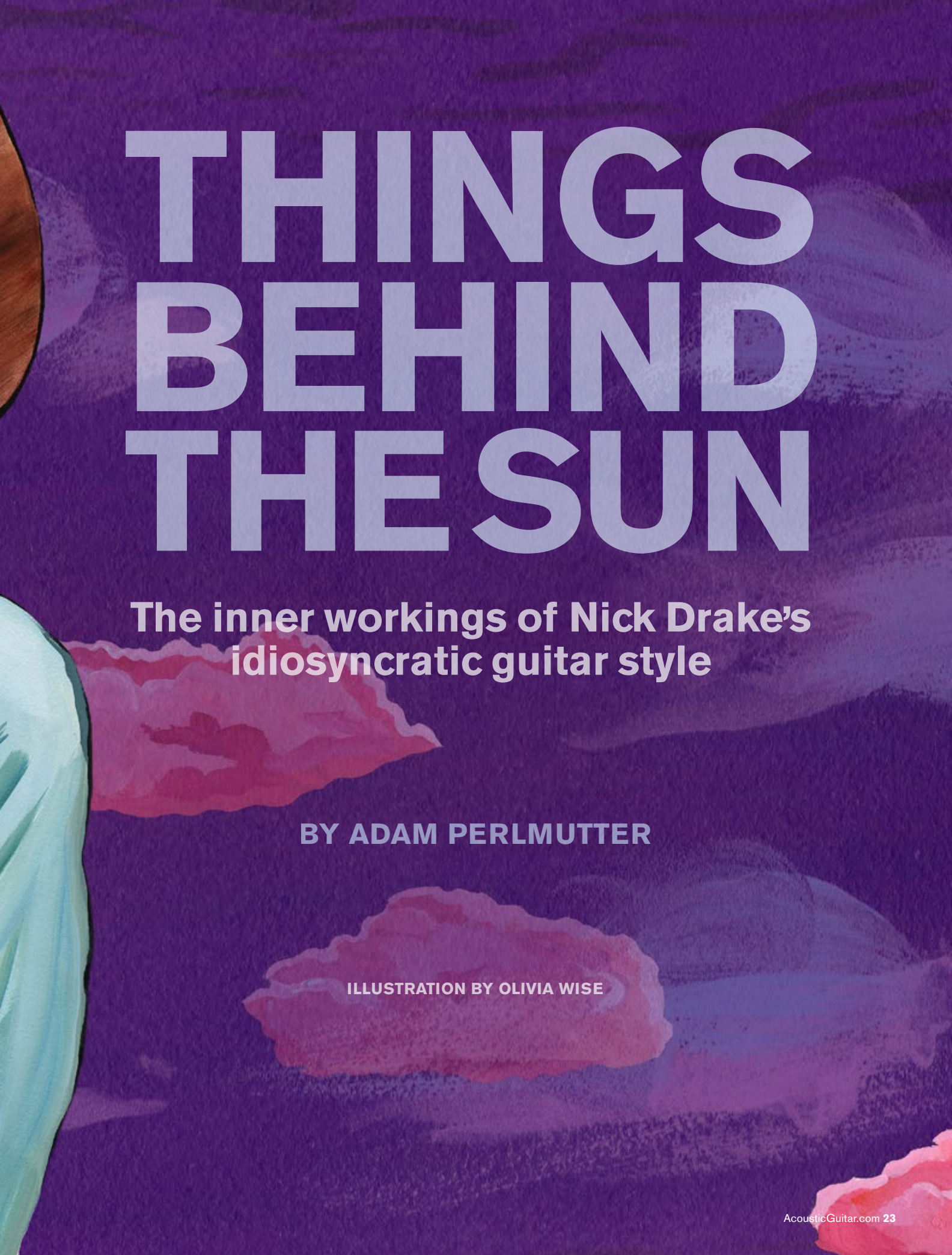
Nathan Salsburg is the curator for the Alan Lomax Archive at the Association for Cultural Equity, as well as a professional instrumentalist. His latest album, Third *(No Quarter Records), was released last July.*

A MARK OF EXPERTISE

On paper, Hobart Smith's classic take on "Railroad Bill," the paradigm for the snippet of notation shown here, might look straightforward. But to pull it off at Smith's tempo of around 280 quarter notes (140 half notes) per minute is no mean feat. That's why the researcher Stephen Wade considered it a mark of expertise to be able to play it. —*Adam Perlmutter*







THINGS BEHIND THE SUN

The inner workings of Nick Drake's idiosyncratic guitar style

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVIA WISE

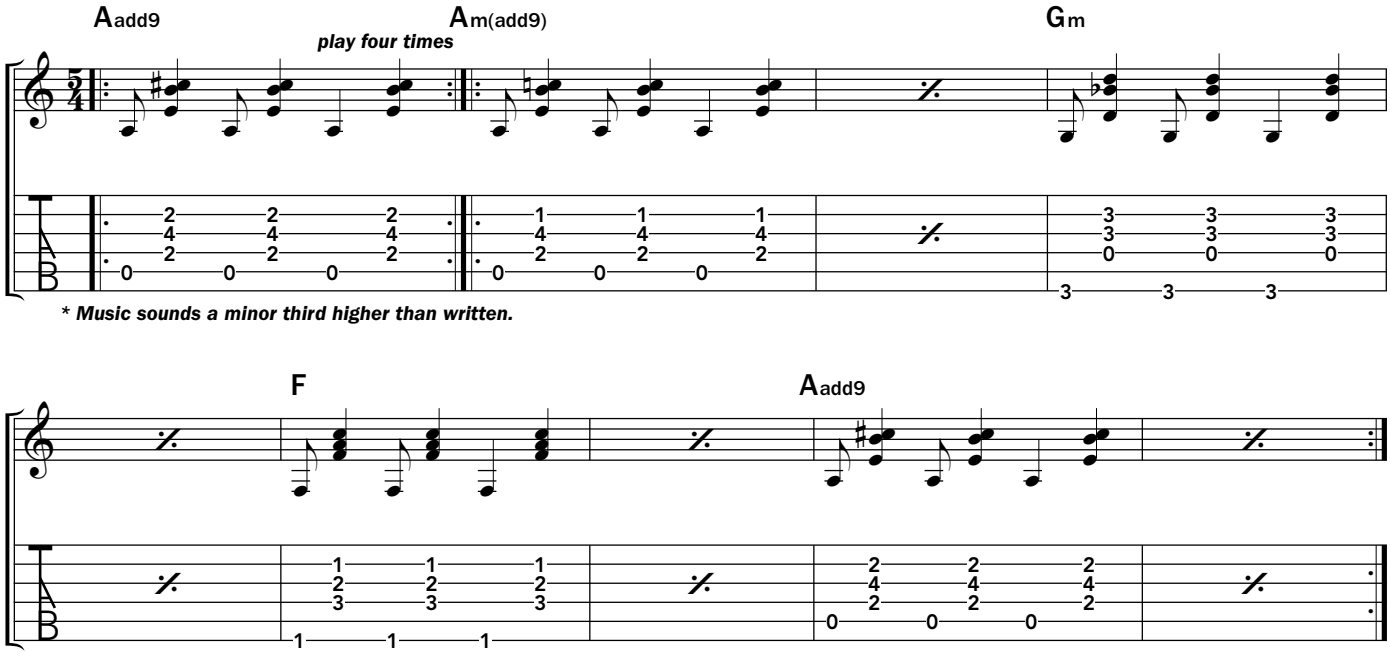
Nick Drake achieved scant commercial success in his brief lifetime, but after he overdosed on antidepressants in his childhood bedroom in 1974, at the age of 26, the British singer-songwriter became a veritable cult hero, venerated equally by musicians, critics, and fans. His music has now long been a rich source of inspiration to a diverse range of artists, from singer-songwriters like Elton John and Norah Jones to jazz musicians such as pianist Brad Mehldau and vocalist Lizz Wright.

Much has certainly been made about Drake's reclusive persona, as well as his intelligent, impressionistic lyrics—he had been an English student in Cambridge—and his haunting voice. As a guitarist, Drake was similarly remarkable, both prodigious and inventive. While clearly inspired by British contemporaries like Bert Jansch and John Renbourn, Drake developed his own voice based on a use of unusual tunings and strategic capo placement, to say nothing of a penchant for mixing folk and jazz strains in quietly thrilling ways.

The unorthodox tunings made it possible for Drake to create complex harmonies from one- and two-fingered chord shapes, freeing him to concentrate on his highly detailed picking patterns. In the process, he often spun a dense contrapuntal web that was as integral to his songs as his lyrics and vocals—each tune a revelation.



Example 1
***Capo III**



In this lesson we'll look under the microscope at the guitar parts to eight songs from Drake's three studio albums—*Five Leaves Left* (1969), *Bryter Layter* (1971), and *Pink Moon* (1972)—grouped in four different tunings.

STANDARD IN TUNING ONLY

Though known by guitarists for his unusual tunings, Drake did in fact play a bunch of songs in standard tuning, among them, "River Man" and "Things Behind the Sun." The former, which is the inspiration for **Example 1**, appears on *Five Leaves Left* (the title a reference to a refill warning in packs of Rizla rolling papers) and is an excellent example of the singer-songwriter's deft approach to harmony.

Though the song is in the key of A minor (sounding as C minor, due to a capo at the third fret), it starts off on a sunny note, and a colorful one at that. As depicted in the intro (bar 1), instead of a basic open-A chord, Drake opted for the more flavorful Aadd9. But the mood darkens at the onset of the verse (bar 2), with the introduction of the tonic minor chord, Am(add9). The verse winds its way back to Aadd9 before returning to Am(add9) on the repeat—a clever move lending emotional heft, reinforced by the original recording's deep string arrangement.

To play Ex. 1, hold down each chord shape for its full duration, picking the bass notes on



strings 5 and 6 with your thumb and the chords above with your index, middle, and ring fingers. Note that the song is in 5/4—or five quarter notes per measure—a meter not usually associated with popular music, the jazz pianist Dave Brubeck's crossover hit "Take Five" being a notable exception. If it's easier, you can think of this instead as alternating bars of 3/4 and 2/4. Try playing along with the original recording to copy its characteristic gait.

"Things Behind the Sun," from *Pink Moon*, starts off on a harmonically ambiguous chord, Asus2 (sounding as C♯sus2 because of a capo at the fourth fret). But the song's dark minor mood is firmly established with the introduction of an Am chord. The notation here (**Example 2**) takes its cue from the song's intro (bars 2–6), which also forms the foundation of the verse.

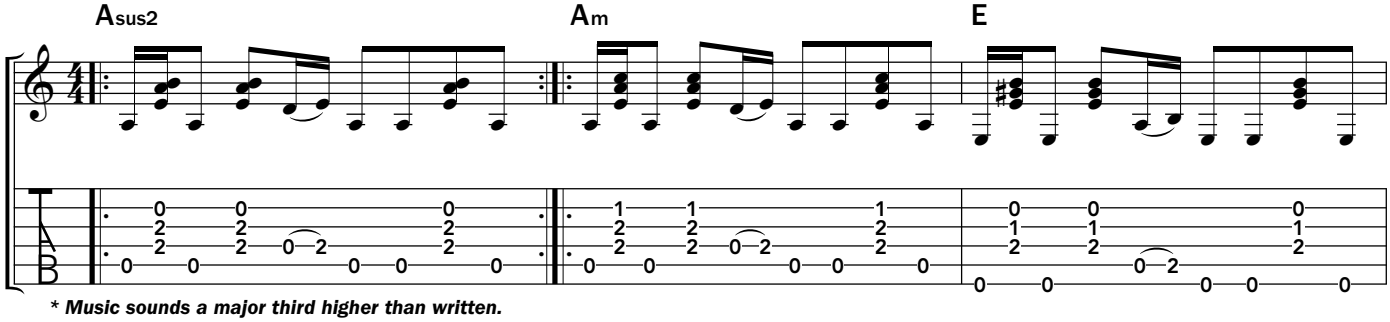
The picking hand plays a fairly involved role in Ex. 2, so it's important to avoid excessive tension in that hand. The passage, with its syncopations, is also highly rhythmic, so you'll want to feel it with precision. It might be useful to subdivide—that is, to count the music in eighth notes, rather than quarters, as you normally would in 4/4 time. Be sure, too, to take a moment to listen closely to the interesting harmonies, especially the movement between the E and the F6/9(♯4).

A SLIGHT WRINKLE

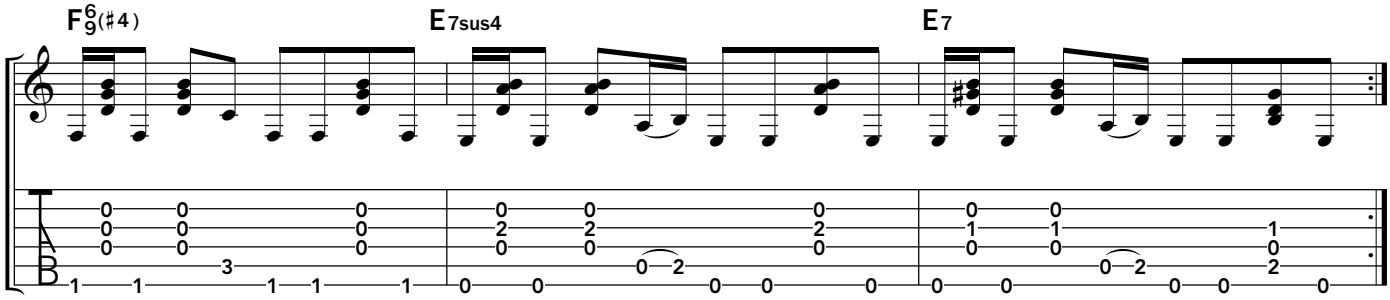
In two of his tunes, "Cello Song" and "The Thoughts of Mary Jane," which sit alongside each other on the B side of *Five Leaves Left*, Drake used a tuning that represents only a small deviation from the norm—low to high, E A D F♯ B E—the third string down a half step from standard. But this slight adjustment makes for some beautifully different effects.

Example 3 is based on a portion of the intro to "Cello Song." Throughout, a thumb-picked open A string (sounding as E♭), played in steady quarter notes, lends a driving feel. The first eight bars are based on the IV chord, A7, but there's plenty of variation to be had as the melody notes work their way up the

Example 2
***Capo IV**



** Music sounds a major third higher than written.*



A Mixolydian mode (A B C♯ D E F♯ G). On the original recording, Drake plays this part at an impressively brisk clip, one that's best to work up to slowly. When you're practicing the figure, pay close attention to where the upper and lower notes fall simultaneously (like on beats 1 and 4 of bar 1). For the A7 measures, use your second and first fingers to stop the notes at frets 2 and 1, respectively, and go for smoothness and rhythmic precision throughout.

Many fans regard Drake as a dark and mysterious songwriter, but "The Thoughts of Mary Jane" reveals a brighter side. The intro and verse sections of this song are the benchmark for **Example 4**, with its poignant harmonies and rolling arpeggios. Key to playing this passage successfully is doing so gently, with an even picking attack between your thumb, index, and ring fingers, and smoothly. Seek out the most efficient fretting fingerings as well. For instance, I recommend playing the Amaj7 with fingers 1, 2, and 3 on strings 4, 3, and 2, respectively. That way, all you have to do is lift your second finger to access the subsequent A6 chord, and then, with your third finger still on string 2, you can grab string 4 at fret 1 with your first finger, to form the B9/A chord.

TUNING DOWN

In songs like "Hazey Jane I," "Hazey Jane II," "Which Will," and "Pink Moon" (see full transcription on page 60), Drake used a unique



slackened tuning, lowest string to highest, C G C F C E, the open strings of which form a rich Cadd4 chord. To get into this tuning from standard, lower string 6 by two whole steps and strings 5, 4, and 3 by a whole step each; raise string 2 by a half step. If you want to spend any amount of time in this tuning, it would be optimal to use heavy strings, but it should work well enough with light or medium strings.

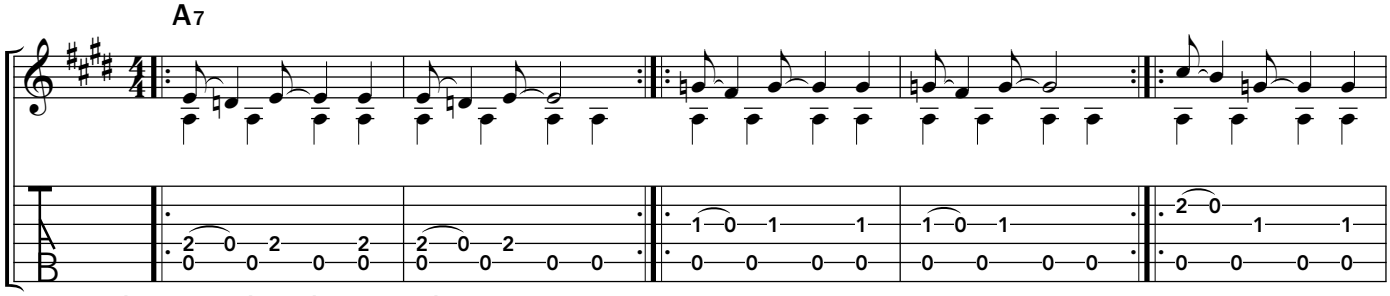
"Hazey Jane I," off of *Bryter Layter*, begins with a flurry of notes on the acoustic guitar, supported by bass guitar, strings, and percussion. **Example 5** is in the style of the guitar part, in which a series of jazzy chords are punctuated with slurs between single fretted notes and their corresponding open strings. This is a formidable figure, so if needed, isolate any problematic areas, like the pull-offs and hammer-ons in the two-beat pickup measure and elsewhere, until you have perfected them.

Throughout, pick the four-note chords with your thumb, index, middle, and ring fingers, or strum them briskly with your thumb or, alternatively, with your index finger. If, by the way, these chords feel awkward to pick, you can eliminate the lowest note in each voicing, for example, the fourth-string D on the Dm9 chord. Whichever picking approach you choose, in order to pull off Ex. 5, you'll need to transition seamlessly between the single-note and strummed portions, and the best way to confirm that you're doing so is to use a metronome.

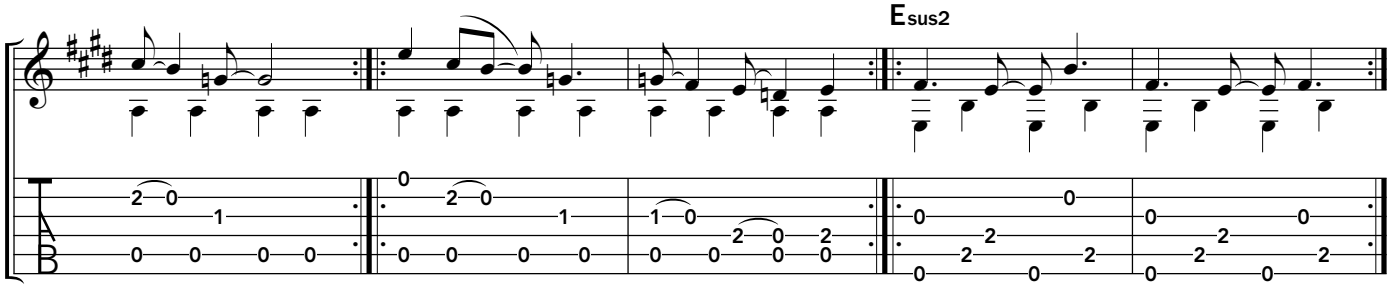
On "Which Will," from *Pink Moon*, the foundation of which informs **Example 6**, Drake took a similar approach to "Hazey Jane I," embellishing single-note nuggets with chordal strums to create a texturally and harmonically sophisticated accompaniment. When playing Ex. 6, unlike on the previous examples, you should forego a capo; that way you can enjoy the extended low end provided by the tuning, as well as match Drake's original studio recording. As with "Hazey Jane I," practice the figure slowly, isolating any tricky spots before stitching everything together, and carefully count the rhythms throughout.

Example 3

***Tuning: E A D F♯ B E, Capo VI**

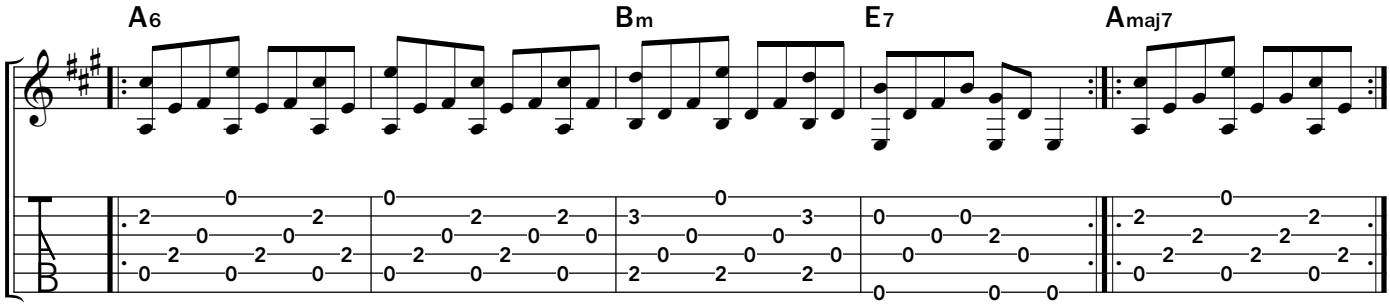


**** Music sounds a tritone higher than written.***

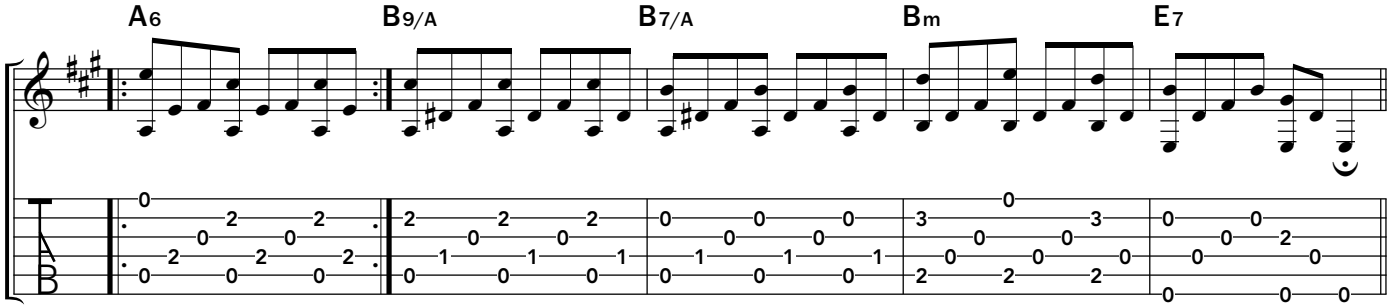


Example 4

***Tuning: E A D F♯ B E, Capo VI**

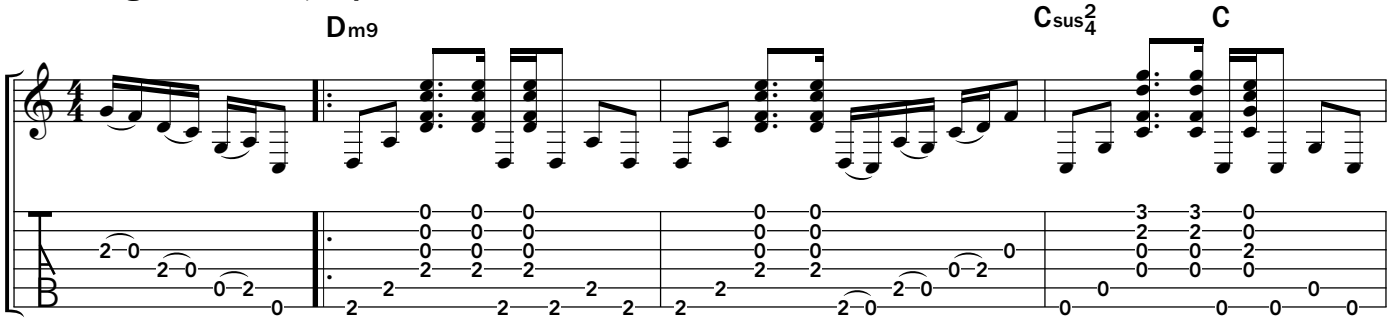


** Music sounds a tritone higher than written.*

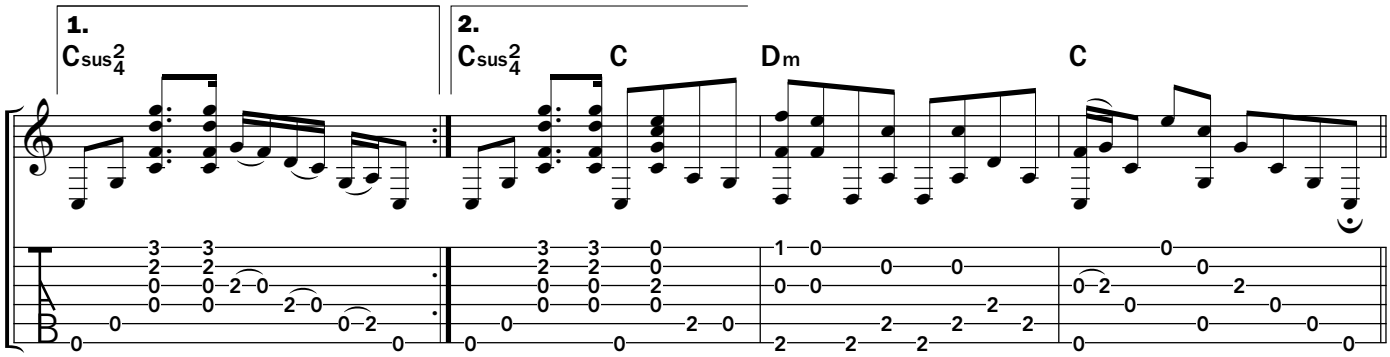


Example 5

***Tuning: C G C F C E, Capo II**



** Music sounds a major second higher than written.*



LOWER STILL

Drake used an even more slackened tuning—B E B E B E, the open strings forming a Bsus4 or E5 chord—in songs like "Man in a Shed" and "Fly." From standard tuning, lower string 3 by a minor third, such that it sounds an octave lower than the first string. Do the same with string 4, which should then be an octave below string 2. Next, lower strings 5 and 6 by a fifth each, or an octave below strings 3 and 4, respectively.

On "Man in a Shed" (*Five Leaves Left*), Drake made the most of a two-finger chord grip, fretted on strings 4 and 5 alongside the open strings, as approximated in **Example 7**. To play this figure, start by stopping the fourth and fifth strings at fret 4 with your second and third fingers—the same shape that you'll use until the B5 (sounds as D5) in bar 2, then resume at the beginning of bar 3. Be sure to appreciate the colorful harmonies that result from the interaction between this shape and the open strings as you slide down in half steps: Emaj7/G♯, Em7/G, F♯7sus4, etc.

A couple of things to look out for: In bars 1, 2, 5, there's a chord change not on the expected beat 2, but on the *and* of beat 1, so be sure to move the shape in time. You'll find a half-step bend in bar 6—with your third finger, reinforced by your first and second fingers on string 2, nudge the string toward the ceiling such that it matches the pitch of the note found one fret higher. If this a problem, just slide up to that pitch. Also, as shown in the swing indication at the top of the example, play the eighth notes not evenly as written, but long-short, for jazzy rhythmic effect.

Heard on *Bryter Layter* and also appearing on the soundtrack to the 2001 film *The Royal Tenenbaums*, "Fly" found Drake further exploring textures involving fretted notes pitted against open strings in the tuning. The studio recording of the song, by the way, features one of the grandest arrangements in Drake's body of work, in which the singer-songwriter's steel-string guitar is gilded with Baroque-style viola and harpsichord, courtesy of the Velvet Underground's John Cale.
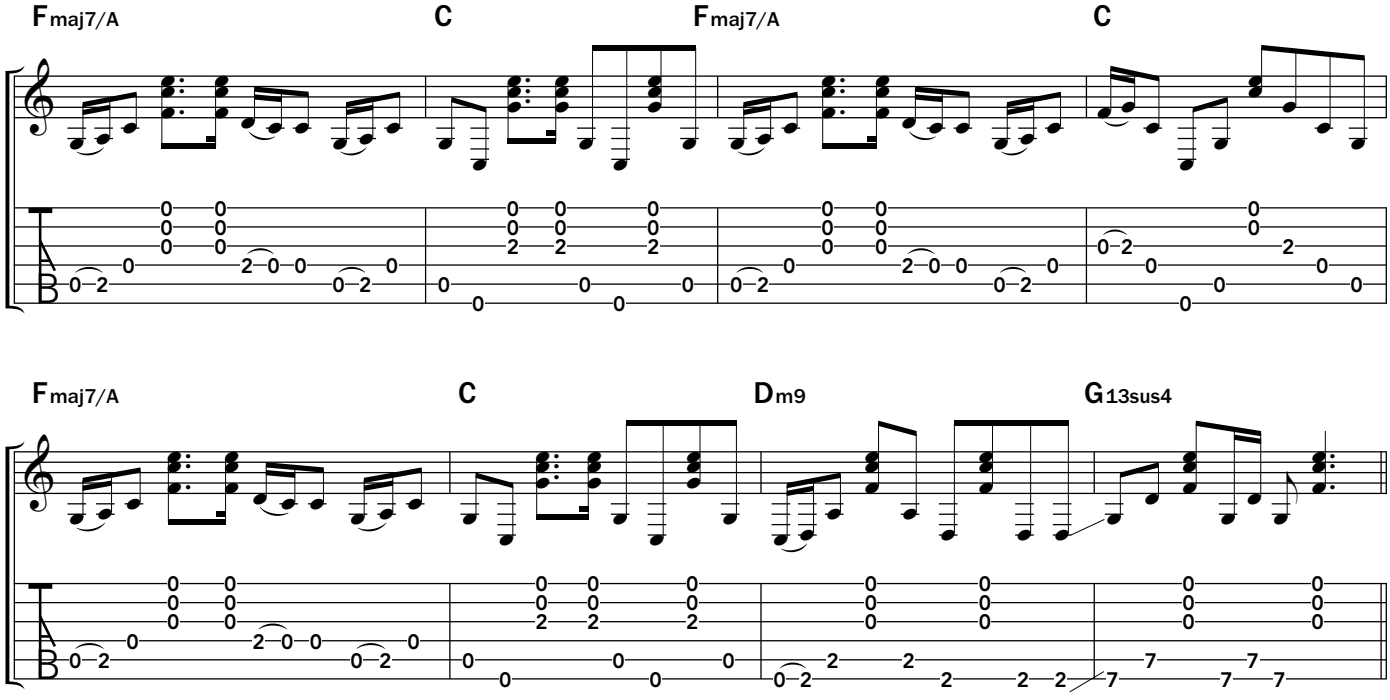
The unorthodox tunings made it possible for Drake to create complex harmonies from one- and two-fingered chord shapes, freeing him to concentrate on his highly detailed picking patterns.

Example 8 is inspired by the intro and verse sections from "Fly," which essentially form the bulk of the song. In bars 1 and 2, a descending line within the E major scale (sounds as G♯/A♭) is played in second position—remember, use your first, third, and fourth fingers on the second-, fourth-, and fifth-fret notes, respectively—and each fretted note is paired with two adjacent open strings, lending a kind of pastoral effect.

If you've tackled the other figures in this lesson, then Ex. 8 should be fairly accessible. A potentially tricky spot is the chord change, to B5 from Emaj7/D♯, between bars 6 and 7. A little fretting-hand efficiency is in order here. Play the Asus2 in bar 5 with your second finger on string 5 and your fourth finger on string 2, sliding that shape down one fret for the Emaj7/D♯ chord in the following measure. That way, you'll be easily prepared to play the B5 chord in bar 7—just keep your second finger on string 5 and add your third finger to string 3.

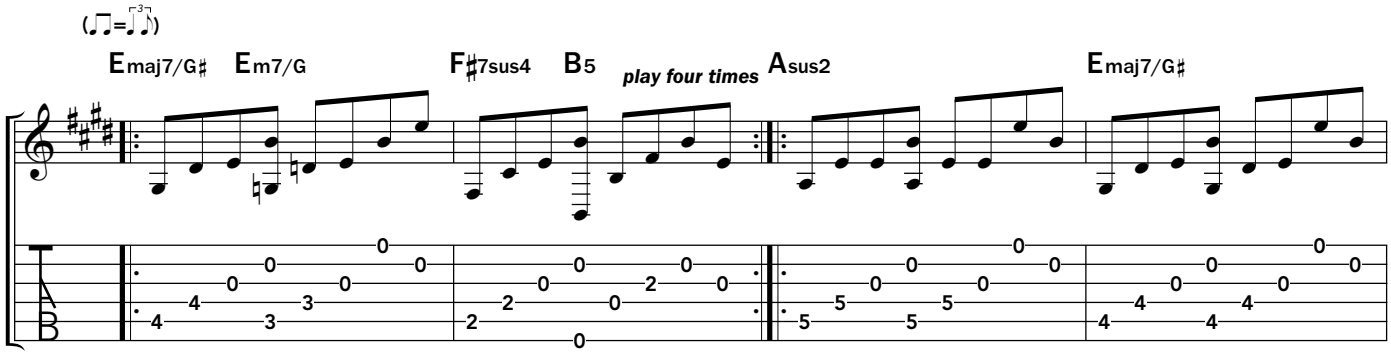
Remember, of course, to take a moment to absorb the beautiful textures and harmonies facilitated by this nonstandard tuning. But consider that ultimately the biggest takeaways from scrutinizing Drake's guitar style aren't necessarily the specific tunings, chord progressions, and picking patterns, but rather a welcome spirit of adventurousness and an exploration of the fretboard far beyond stock fingerings and patterns. AG

Example 6
Tuning: C G C F C E

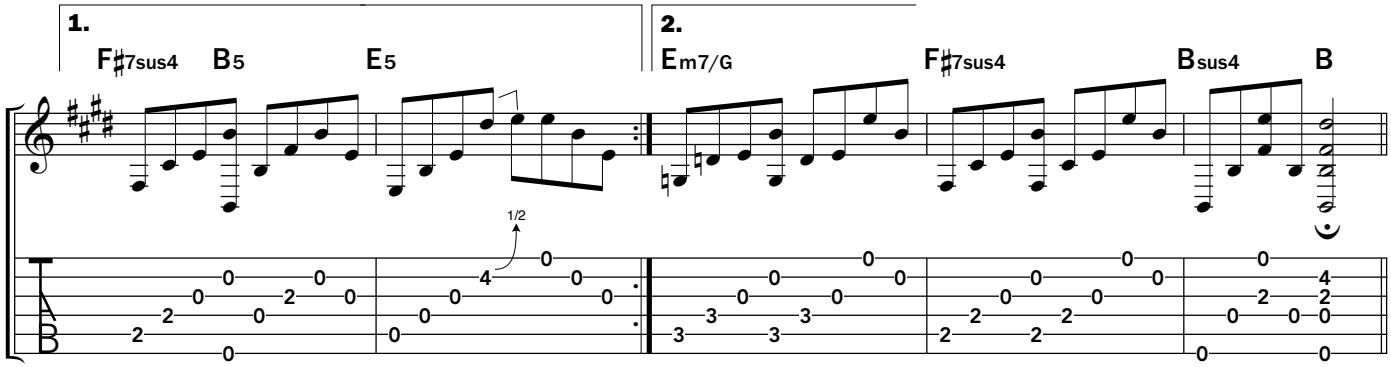


Example 7

***Tuning: B E B E B E, Capo III**

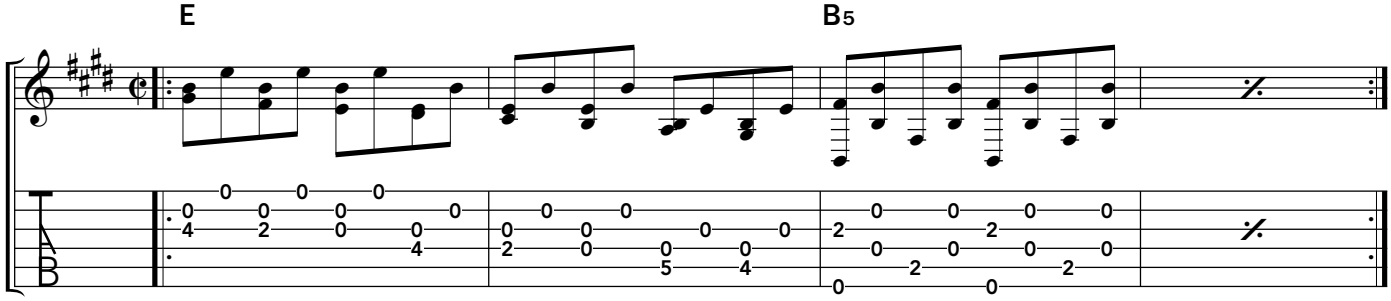


**Music sounds a minor third higher than written.*

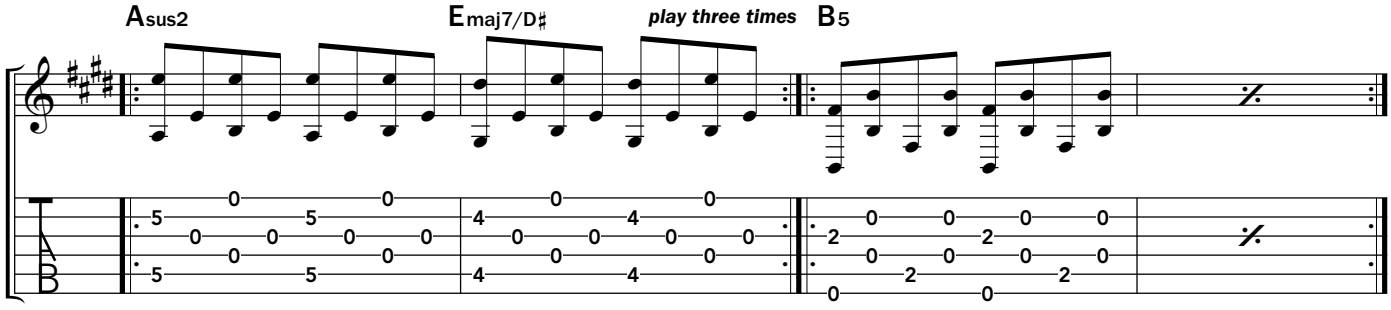


Example 8

***Tuning: B E B E B E, Capo IV**



**Music sounds a major third higher than written.*



HOME RECORDING FOR ACOUSTIC GUITAR

A primer on the best ways to capture your music for posterity–or yourself | **BY DOUG YOUNG**

Whether you'd like to release an album, share music with friends, or just capture your practice sessions to evaluate your performance, recording is an important part of your musical journey. Although recording used to mean going to a studio, you can now achieve professional-quality results at home with a modest amount of gear. In this article, we'll look at tools and techniques for home recording, focusing on the acoustic guitar. Your music may involve other instruments or vocals, but naturally, as guitarists, we want the guitar to sound great, whether it's just a small part of larger ensemble or the featured instrument.

GETTING STARTED—WHAT YOU NEED

Recording yourself requires some gear, and these days, virtually all recording setups use digital technology. All digital recording systems consist of a similar signal chain: microphone, preamp, analog-to-digital converter, an actual digital recorder, and a disk drive to store the recording. The simplest—and often least expensive—recording setups provide all those pieces in a single device, while at the opposite extreme, you could put together a computer-based system that mixes hardware and software, and that contains of each of those pieces individually.

For simply capturing practice sessions or lessons, it's hard to beat an all-in-one recorder, such as the Zoom H1n ($120). With built-in mics and one-button recording, these devices are perfect for cases where ease-of-use is the highest priority, but are still capable of good-sounding recordings. For the next step up, portable recorders like the Zoom H5 ($280) or Tascam DR-40 ($163) allow you to use external mics while still offering one-button operation. External microphones usually produce higher sound quality, and also allow more flexibility in mic placement—critical for capturing a good guitar sound. Another simple option is to leverage your smart phone. Attachable microphones, such as the Shure MV88 (iOS devices, $129) can improve the sound quality, and apps are available that can turn your phone or tablet into a full-fledged studio. Check out GarageBand (free) or Auria ($25) for iOS devices, or Audio Evolution Mobile Studio ($6.99) for Android. These approaches work best for solo performers or situations where you can at least record all performers at once.

For more flexibility and possibly better sound quality, you might use a system consisting of a laptop, recording software like GarageBand (Mac) or Audacity (PC), and a USB or Thunderbolt audio interface like the two-channel PreSonus AudioBox ($100) or Apogee Duet ($650), along with one or two microphones. Another option is to skip the recording interface by using a USB mic that can be plugged directly into the computer. USB mics come in a wide price range, from the Blue Yeti ($119) to the Neumann TLM103-D ($1,600).



DIY acoustic panel

ACOUSTICS: ROOM TREATMENT

Room acoustics present one of the biggest challenges to recording acoustic guitar at home. Poor room acoustics—usually caused by hard surfaces that produce reflections (faint echoes)—can make your recordings sound weak and distant, or cause certain notes to be louder than others. This is one area where pro studios have an edge over the home studio, and creating a studio-quality acoustic environment can be prohibitively invasive and expensive to do at home.

For acoustic guitar, however, it is usually possible to get good recordings in a typical furnished room. A portable recording system can make it easy to try different locations to identify the best-sounding room in your house. Larger rooms are often better than small rooms, so you might favor the living room or a den over a spare bedroom. Furniture, drapes, and even bookcases can help break up reflections.

There are also several products—from panels designed to hang on walls, to temporary baffles that create a local acoustic space around your guitar—that help with room acoustics. A web search for "acoustic panels" will turn up many options. Beware that folklore solutions like egg cartons are almost entirely useless, and some others, such as acoustic foam, look pretty but usually don't fully address the issues.

MIC PLACEMENT

Mic placement has arguably the largest impact on your recorded guitar sound. If your recording involves multiple instruments, you may want to record the guitar in mono, using a single mic. A good starting point is to aim the mic at the point where the neck meets the body. However, don't be afraid to try other locations. Listen with headphones while moving the mic around—every guitar tends to have its own sweet spot. Audio engineers sometimes recommend placing microphones two or three feet away from a guitar to capture its true character, which works well in rooms with ideal acoustics. For home recording, however, you will probably get better results by placing a mic 12 inches or less from your guitar. The closer the mic is to your guitar, the louder the guitar will be relative to the room, which helps alleviate less-than-optimal room acoustics. Cardioid mics do exhibit a phenomenon known as "proximity effect" that produces more bass as you move closer to the sound source, so experiment to find the right balance.

When guitar is the featured instrument, recording in stereo can be very effective. One common stereo mic setup is known as "XY": Place the mic capsules as close together as possible, with the mics at approximately a 90-degree angle from each other. Start by aiming the pair at the neck/body joint, adjusting the location until you get a sound you like, and the sound is balanced between left and right. Another useful location is the center of the guitar, directly above (not directly in front of) the sound hole, roughly aligned with the waist of the guitar.

Another common stereo mic placement is known as "spaced pairs." Here, one mic is aimed at the neck/body joint, and the other around the bridge. Again, experiment with both exact placement and distance until you dial-in the balance and the tone you want.

When recording in stereo, you can record each mic to a different track, and pan one mic left, and the other to the right, or your software may support stereo tracks that automatically handle the panning for you. Consult the manual for your recording software for options.

Levels are also important. With digital recording, it is not necessary to record at maximum volume levels, and it's better to leave plenty of headroom. You can easily raise the level of a quiet recording when mixing, but a note that unexpectedly exceeds the maximum threshold will distort in a way that is all but impossible to fix.







For more complex recording scenarios, such as recording multiple instruments at once, step up to multi-channel computer interfaces like the PreSonus Studio 192 ($800), MOTU 8M ($1,495), or Apogee Ensemble Thunderbolt ($2,500). Popular software for recording more complex projects includes Pro Tools (various price points), Logic Pro (Mac only, $200), and Steinberg Cubase ($99-$550).

MICROPHONES

It can be tempting to use a guitar pickup to record, but microphones almost always result in more professional-sounding recordings. Condenser microphones with a cardioid (directional) pattern are the most frequent choice for recording acoustic guitar. While some legendary microphones come with jaw-dropping price tags, you can get excellent results with inexpensive options like the Audio-Technica AT-2020 or AT-2021 ($100). For higher budgets, consider the Shure SM81 ($350), or Neumann KM184 ($850). Although it's possible to get a good sound with a single mic, two mics allow you to record in stereo. When planning your budget, don't forget that you will need mic stands and cables as well—these add up!

MONITORING

Critical listening and evaluating your results are key to creating a good recording. Although

When recording, try to avoid extraneous noises—fight the tendency to tap your foot, for example, unless you want it to be heard on the recording.

home stereo systems are fine for listening to music, studio monitors are designed to reveal the details of your recording, allowing you to make informed decisions about everything from mic placement to the final mix. Monitors play such an important role that it's worth allocating a hefty part of your budget to them. KRK's ROKIT 5 speakers ($150 each) are popular budget speakers. Stepping up a bit, you might consider ADAM Audio's A7X7 ($750 each) or Mackie's HR824mk2 ($700 each).

It can be challenging to produce quality mixes using headphones, but it's good to at least check your mixes with them, since many people listen to music with headphones. Open-back headphones, like Beyerdynamic's DT 990 Pro ($180), are a good choice when mixing. Closed-back headphones, which help isolate the sound from sensitive microphones, are critical if you plan to overdub (add a part to previously-recorded tracks). Sony's MDR-7506 ($95) are ubiquitous in studios, but there are many others.

PUT THAT GEAR TO WORK

Whether you're recording a solo guitar piece or a full band, a bit of planning can go a long way toward ensuring a good recording. The more instruments or musical parts you have, the more you have to think about the logistics. The basic steps are tracking (actually recording), editing, mixing, and mastering. It's not unusual to record and edit the parts yourself and then take your tracks to a professional studio to mix and master. A pro studio will have access to better tools—from monitors to reverbs and processors—than you are likely to have at home, and it can actually be more cost-effective to pay an experienced mixing engineer for their time than to buy the gear involved.

Let's consider each step of the process.

TRACKING

The first step is capturing your guitar part. If you're recording solo guitar, it's a good idea to play the tune all the way through several times. It's nice to strive for perfection—and



THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RECORDING

Most musicians who have been in the recording studio have experienced "red light fever," a sudden case of nerves as soon as the recording starts. The cure is usually experience. Recording often enough that you can relax and play your best, knowing that you can edit to fix small mistakes, and remembering that you have the freedom to re-record as many times as you want can help calm your nerves.

Part of the problem is that recording often feels like you are playing under a microscope. Minor intonation problems with your guitar, as well as squeaks and noises you make while playing, suddenly loom large. You may need to adjust your playing style—an aggressive percussive technique that is a crowd-pleaser when playing live may not sound as good on a recording. Many performers play faster in live performances, perhaps rushing, which can produce excitement and energy in front of an audience. We usually expect a recording to be a bit more precise, while at the same time capturing a musical performance with an appropriate amount of energy.

A big benefit of home recording is that you can work through these issues on your own time, without feeling like other musicians or engineers are passing judgement, and without the feeling that the clock is ticking on expensive studio time.

gratifying if it happens!—but as long as you get at least one take that is mostly solid and has a good feel, you can fix small problems by editing, pulling pieces from another take if needed. You can also record short sections that can be patched in when editing. When recording, try to avoid extraneous noises—fight the tendency to tap your foot, for example, unless you want it to be heard on the recording. Mics tend to capture every little noise, so try to minimize movement while playing, be careful with heavy breathing, and remember to leave a few seconds of silence before you start and at the end, while you wait for final notes to die out.

If multiple instruments or vocals are involved, things get more complex. If you are recording guitar and vocals, for example, you'll need to decide if you want to record them together or record the guitar first and overdub the vocal. You may be more comfortable singing and playing at the same time, but this approach limits your options when mixing and editing. Even if you record vocals and guitar to separate tracks using different mics, the sound of each will "bleed" into the other tracks. Recording the guitar part alone, and then overdubbing the vocal, may help create a more professional sound.

If you'd like to keep a steady tempo—especially important if you plan to overdub additional instruments—you may want to record to a click track, basically a metronome that you can hear in your headphones. If you are recording with a band, consider recording the instruments that form the basis of the groove first—that may be a rhythm guitar part, but it might also be drums or bass. Once the foundation is firm, you can proceed to overdub everything else by listening to the rhythm track in headphones. Playing well while listening to a click does require some practice, but is often helpful, even for a solo guitar piece. Practicing with a metronome in the days leading up to the recording can also be very effective, even if you choose to not record with a click.

EDITING

One benefit of modern digital recording software is that recordings can be edited easily. In the simplest case, editing may consist of simply trimming off extra space before and after the song. However, it is also possible to replace sections, even individual notes, alter timing, and remove noises like chair squeaks or car horns—perhaps allowing you to save a great performance marred by a small glitch. Successful editing depends on being able to record multiple takes consistently. Changes in volume level, tempo, intonation, or even shifting in your chair can change the sound enough that the edit point becomes obvious to the listener.

MIXING

Once all tracks are complete, the next step is the mix—basically setting relative levels between instruments, and applying EQ and effects such as reverb. This may be a simple step: For solo guitar, mixing might consist of just adding a little reverb, while for guitar with vocals, your focus might be on adjusting the relative volume levels. With more complex instrumentation, mixing may involve fading parts in and out, adjusting levels between instruments as the song progresses to bring out certain parts, and so on.

It's a good idea to listen to your mixes on a variety of playback systems, to make sure the music sounds good in the car, on your home stereo, on your iPod or smart phone, or wherever.

RELEASE

For commercial releases, it is typical to send your final mix to a mastering engineer to finish the project. A mastering engineer brings an experienced ear to your mix and can help ensure you sound your best wherever your music is played by applying EQ, adjusting levels, and more. Although many mastering engineers can handle diverse styles, you might look at credits on your favorite CDs to get ideas of engineers with experience in your genre of music.





DEALING WITH NOISE

Noise, not to be confused with room acoustics, presents one of the biggest challenges for home recording. Obstacles range from the neighbor's dog barking or the kids watching TV in the next room to air conditioning or even the fan in the computer you are using to record. Sound from cars, airplanes, leaf blowers, and more are unavoidable in urban environments. One solution to many of these problems is to record at quiet times of the day—for example, late at night after others in the household have powered down for the evening. The more relaxed nature of home recording can also be a benefit. If your neighbor roars out in his motorcycle during a recording, just do it again. Consider turning off the furnace or air while recording—after warning your housemates. When all else fails, software like iZotope Elements ($129) or SoundSoap ($149) can do an impressive job of removing anything from computer fan noise to chair squeaks without damaging your recording.

For more casual releases of individual songs, you may not need the mastering step. There are also software packages, like iZotope Ozone ($129 to $499), that allow you to do some mastering tasks yourself. For CD releases, you also need software that can burn multiple tracks to a CD, such as Wavelab ($99) or DSP-Quatro ($99). Many CD manufacturers also offer mastering packages that may range from simply sequencing your tunes to full-service offerings.

YOUR REWARD

Recording can be a lot of work, but is ultimately rewarding. A good performance captured on a recording is an everlasting testament to your musical vision, an achievement you can be proud of. Home recording also provides a special feeling that comes from being in total artistic control of the process, knowing that you created everything yourself. Any mistakes or challenges along the way will be forgotten in the long run, and you'll be left with what matters most—the music!

Watch Doug Young demonstrate the basics of home recording at AcousticGuitar.com.



TALL, DARK & HANDSOME



T333E-BST
Auditorium
Acoustic/Electric
This beautiful auditorium style acoustic-electric guitar features a solid mahogany top and an understated dark burst finish. Built-in Fishman Presys electronics add to the versatility of this modern guitar with vintage appeal.

T333CE-BST
Auditorium
Acoustic/Electric
Enjoy full access to the upper frets on this cutaway auditorium style guitar with solid mahogany top and a dark burst finish. Fishman Presys electrics and a host of other modern design elements make this a great guitar for a variety of players.

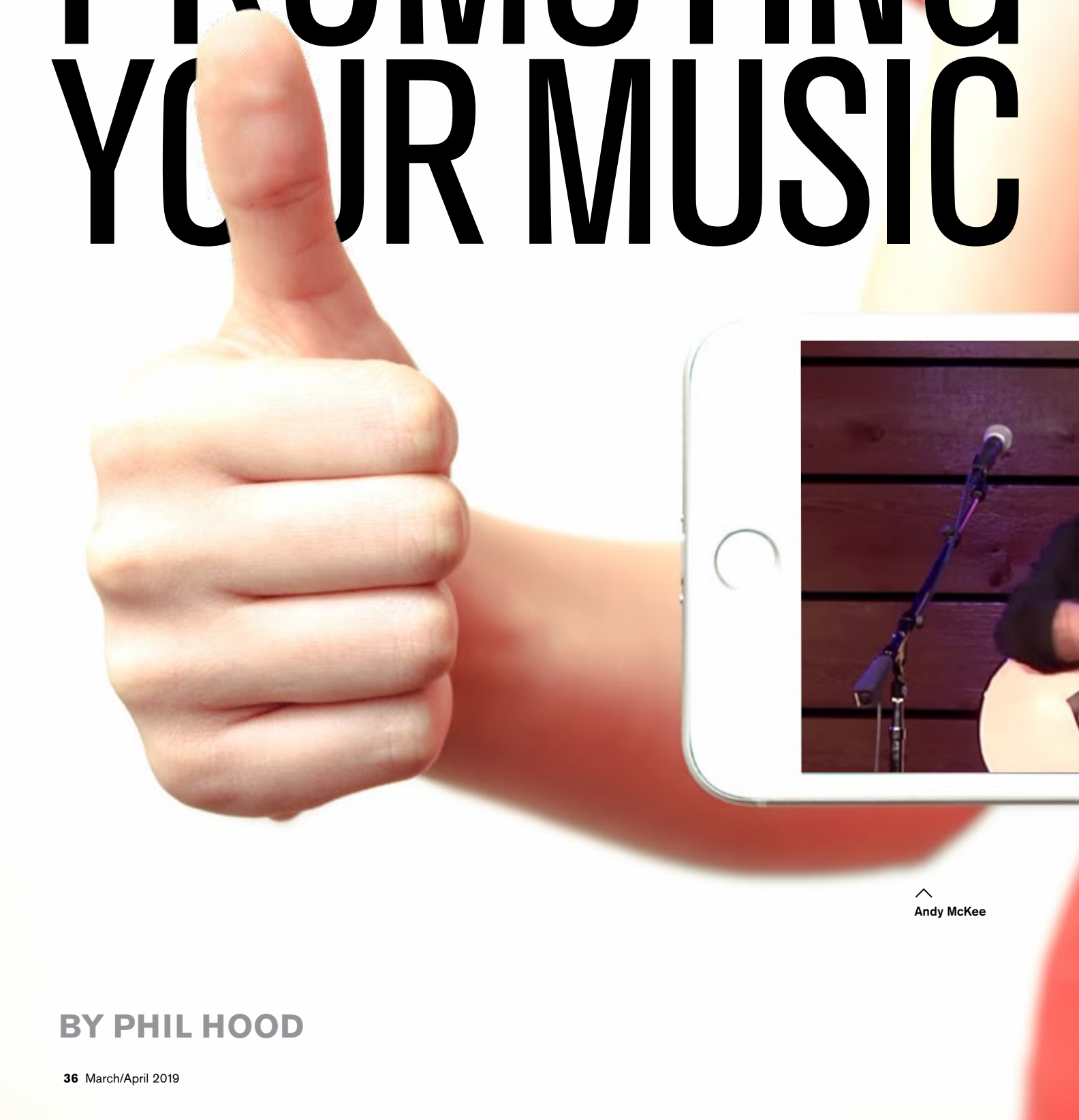
T331
Dreadnought Acoustic
This traditional instrument benefits from a dreadnought design and a solid mahogany top. Mahogany back and sides ensure a warm, rich sound, while the open pore satin finish and forward-shifted X-bracing provide luxurious resonance.

TERRA SERIES

Mitchell

mitchellguitars.com

PROMOTING YOUR MUSIC



Andy McKee

BY PHIL HOOD





Three big bombs went off in the computer industry in the 1990s. The first was the browser, our connection to the internet world. Next came tools, compressed video and audio for transmission over this new medium. Then, the music "sharing" site Napster was launched in 1999. From that moment on, the computer provided a single platform on which to record, distribute, and consume music.

Things were just getting started. In 2003 MySpace launched and within months millions of users and thousands of musicians and bands were discovering each other in ways that had never been possible before. These changes gave birth to an entire new music ecosystem. Digital sales ultimately surpassed record sales. Podcasts, streaming, and YouTube marginalized radio. Studios downsized, but every laptop became a potential recording desk. And the artist's 8x10 promotion glossies were replaced by video links and digital bios.

It's easier than ever to put your music out into the world, and sometimes easier to find an audience. But building a career is still work, just as it has always been. Researching the topic of how to promote yourself involved studying media research and then talking with several people about how they employ today's media outlets to communicate. These included solo guitarists Andy McKee, Daryl Shawn, and Adam Rafferty, the duo Mandolin Orange, Vickie Starr of Girlie Action Media, who is the publicist for Kaki King, and Amanda Cagan of ABC Public Relations, who works with acts from classic stars like Styx to new artists.

WHO ARE YOU? I REALLY WANNA KNOW!

The most important question that needs to be answered in any discussion of promotion is: Who are you?

What do you have to say? What do you want to do with your music? What would success look like to you? And, importantly, how do you like to spend your day, because promoting yourself takes time and, for many of us, challenges our comfort zone. Assuming you don't already have a publicist, management team, and major label contract, you're going to be doing a lot of this work yourself.

Take a minute to examine your goals for taking your career to the next level. Examples might include things like releasing a set number of songs in the coming year; increasing the number of gigs you play; collaborating with an artist you admire; or finding 20 new students. A specific concrete goal is better than a general one. Instead of trying to release ten new songs this year, a better goal is to release one new song at 3:00 p.m. on the 15th of every month.

Maybe your goal is just to get a few more people to hear your music, and that's OK, too. Guitarist Adam Rafferty was a dyed-in-the-wool jazzer who threw in the towel on his New York career when he could no longer make a living touring with his band. He was already videoing his practice sessions, so in 2008 he decided to share his arrangement of Stevie Wonder's "Superstition," on YouTube. More than two million views later, he looks back on that effort as a catalyst of his new career as a solo fingerstyle guitarist and teacher who has found a relatively small but global audience of students and fans who love his music.

Your marketing, whether it's a killer YouTube video or an event poster on an old-fashioned kiosk, should try to do one of three things: Increase your visibility; build your credibility as an artist; and, provide you with income. The tools for doing that range from print and websites to social media and video. We'll look at the most essential tools for increasing visibility and building credibility, and how successful artists use them to drive relationships with fans and sell tickets at the door.

THE ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Phase 1 of any marketing and visibility effort is your website. There are some very big bands who eschew them, preferring only to use a Facebook page and other social media. I also know people who refuse to dress warmly when it's freezing outside. Don't be one of them. If you don't have a website, you are ensuring that you'll lose significant Google traffic.

Your website makes it much easier for new and old fans to find your tour info, songs and videos, lessons, merchandise, personal blogs, gear lists, and more. And, it should always be up to date so fans can depend on it. Vickie Starr comments that "bands should never play a gig that is not on their website." If you're just getting started, you should at least go on WordPress.com or Wix.com and build a simple site. You can always improve it as you go, or engage photographers and designers to help you kick up the visuals. (See our tools list on p. 39.)

FACEBOOK

It's tempting to just use a Facebook business page because you can set up one in minutes.

However, it's too limited in how you can present information. And, Facebook owns 100 percent of everything you post on it. Guitarist Adam Rafferty says adamantly, "Your website is the only digital property you can create that no one can take away from you."

Despite the foregoing, you need Facebook, too. Maybe you have friends who have dumped Facebook in light of privacy breaches

and other recent crises with social media. But from a business standpoint that's not wise. With nearly 2 billion users it is arguably the most important social media platform in the world, especially for users over 30.

Facebook shares your posts with friends, followers, and others who have some relation to you based on their algorithm. It's no secret that Facebook has continually tightened down on sharing of posts, partly in an attempt to force companies to advertise. If your posts aren't reaching enough people, you have two ways to increase their visibility: boosts and ads. Both can be effective because of Facebook's targeting capability. If you are performing in Davenport, Iowa, you can buy an ad or boost a post to reach only guitarists of a specified age within a 50-mile radius of the venue. Vickie Starr creates geo-targeted Facebook posts for every show.

I'm not recommending you start with paid ads or posts, because as a musician you have an advantage: Facebook shares video posts more than any other type—which means your video posts are boosted already without you paying them for it. But be careful. Facebook only boosts embedded videos—those that are uploaded directly to the platform, not merely linked to a video hosted on your YouTube page.

TWITTER

Twitter has 340+ million users and a good representation in the music community. But it's not as crucial as your website or Facebook. Starr says, "It depends on the artist, but we consider Twitter to be least important of all the social platforms these days. People tend to use Twitter mostly for news and gossip, and less for discovering music or planning their weekend."

Most of the guitarists I've examined basically repeat Instagram or Facebook posts on Twitter. But not all of them. Daryl Shawn creatively posts up to five times a day. He offers a lesson and a free chord shape each day. This reinforces a key point about Twitter. It's an intense medium in which frequent posting is rewarded.

If you decide to invest significant time on Twitter, do it right. Have an indelible photo shot—because it's like a logo—and write a crisp bio, since part of it will appear on your page. You should also follow industry contacts whom you may want to know in order to see what they are talking about. That can be invaluable. To encourage more followers, retweet content that interests you. Use hashtags and follow those, such as #fingerstyle, that will help you see what others are doing.

INSTAGRAM

Instagram recently passed one billion users. Seventy-five percent of its users are under the age of 35, and 58 percent are female. If that is not your demographic, you might ignore Instagram for now. But compared to Twitter, which as a text medium tends to be intellectual, critical, and gossipy, Instagram is a supportive, friendly, environment. Starr says, "Instagram is the most important social media site for marketing bands and music right now." Guitarist Andy McKee (@therealmckee) says he was late to the game with Instagram but has started putting more effort there and less on Facebook. Perhaps the most successful solo guitar poster on Instagram is Sam Blakelock, who has amassed more than 400,000 users on his #pickupjazz and #pickupguitar Instagram feeds, mostly by showing short educational clips from amateur followers. He turns this visibility into money by selling lessons from a variety of teachers at his website of the same name.



'Having a predictable time for what you're posting is very important, because users know when you'll be online.'
DARYL SHAWN

On other social media, hashtags are merely useful, but on Instagram they are crucial. That's how posts are surfaced for you. Look for hashtags other musicians use and follow those to find new content and see what's working. You can also change hashtags strategically. If you've been posting songs with the tag #bluesfingerstyle, changing to #travispicking or #deltabluesguitar may surface your images and posts to more potential fans.

RULES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING

Always use images. Social media attention spans are about eight seconds long, according to people who measure such things. You want to connect with your audience at a glance, whether posting a promotion for your music, or just sharing something happening in your musical life.

Posting patterns are crucial. The ratio of promotional posts, which can be self-serving, to more personal, casual posts, has a big impact on whether fans and followers decide to stick around. Experts recommend one promotional post to every four non-promotional posts.

Follow a schedule. Daryl Shawn says, "Having a predictable time for what you're posting is very important, because users know when you'll be online." He posts a daily micro-concert on Facebook at 5:00 p.m. He also posts a new video each Wednesday at noon. Others are less dedicated, but still note the importance. Emily Frantz of Mandolin Orange says, "For the most part we try to keep it loose. When announcing tours and ticket on-sales, we have to be a little more intentional about a schedule."

Experiment to see what works. Unless the idea of sharing parts of your musical self with strangers online is unbearable, you need to give it your best shot. Idealism makes the best marketing, so don't be afraid to show your authentic self. Those quirky waltz arrangements you thought no one wanted to hear may be just what some people are hoping to find.

Play the Game. To succeed at social media you must play the game. For example, if you rarely comment on the posts of others, or visit your site only infrequently, Facebook's algorithm won't share your posts as much. Follow other artists and your most rabid fans. Or curate a list of what you like, something that's easy to do on YouTube or Spotify. What gets traction for them in terms of the number of times it is shared? And, just as tellingly, what doesn't work? You don't have to copy others. You need to learn from them.

Analyze. The beauty of the internet is that you can get very precise data about how people respond to your music and to your outbound marketing. Once you master posting to your audience, use the tools in search, email, and social media apps to improve your efficiency. Learn why some of your posts fall flat and some are shared 200 times. I know a friend, an instrument builder, whose posts get 600 or 700 shares for a post of a new product, while a competitor of similar size gets only a few. Is the difference due to timing? Photography? We know for sure that creativity is rewarded, as it is in all marketing. My friend doesn't just post a great

photo of a new instrument he's built: He tells a compelling story about it.

EMAIL IS KING

Adam Rafferty says, "I've got a couple of million hits on my cover of 'Billie Jean.' Sometimes I find that younger guitarists think the goal is to get a million views on YouTube. But that's not the goal. The goal is to build the email list."

Email is even more crucial if your niche is small. When you are selling lessons or supporting small club dates, you need to reach dedicated followers, not casual readers. Someone willing to receive and occasionally read your email is more likely to see a show, download a lesson, or buy your guitar, than someone who merely clicks "Like."

Counterintuitively, the number of people who open your email usually goes up the more frequently you contact them. Rafferty has an effective program to generate email followers by offering free downloadable lessons, and then he follows up with a tailored program of frequent emails to keep students interested. *Acoustic Guitar* magazine's most fervent list receives daily lessons via email. At the other end of the spectrum, if you tour sporadically and know your audience, infrequent emails can shoulder the load. Guitarist Harvey Reid, who has 32 albums and numerous books to his credit, issues but one newsletter annually with his wife, violinist Joyce Andersen.

MULTIMEDIA AND MONETIZATION

YouTube is hugely influential as a place to find new music, and has played the biggest role in uncovering new stars today. Andy McKee's life flipped 180 degrees because of his YouTube fandom. "I don't know if I can overstate how much my life changed after the response on the internet," he says. And YouTube continues to mint new stars. But it's not highly social. The platform seems to be a natural home for snarky and sophomoric comments instead of useful interactions. Many artists use it as a storage device for video that is embedded elsewhere, and don't respond much on it, except to answer serious questions.

iTunes and Amazon are the most important outlets for physical media and downloads. Spotify is the most important audio streaming site for music discovery, and, like Pandora and other sites, it can provide royalty income. Many artists also use platforms such as Deezer, Soundcloud, and Bandcamp. Middleware sites such as Tunecore save time and do the heavy lifting of formatting and uploading to all of these distribution outlets for a fee. You can use all of these outlets to ensure new releases reach the maximum number of people. To promote recordings, Starr of Girlie Action Media says they often use bite-size 30- or 60-second audio or video clips to promote new releases on social media, and then link to full songs on YouTube and all of the streaming platforms.

SHOW ME THE MONEY

You don't just want to change the world with your music. It would be nice to make some money on the way. The best methods are direct sales of recordings; streaming fees and royalties; sales of lessons, tabs, books, merchandise, and related products; direct donations from fans; and, of course gigs and touring. In addition, artists who achieve enough views can monetize videos on YouTube through advertising. Patreon enables you to ask fans to directly support your music. Shawn is a popular curator of Spotify playlists. As listens climb, so does his income.

The iron rule of the internet is to create more value than you take. You can build visibility and credibility by showing respect for your audience and your fellow musicians. Despite the chaotic and sometimes nasty tone you can encounter online, social media is also a medium where high ideals and authenticity have an impact. Try to solve the problems you have as a guitarist, artist, and human being, and then share that with the audience. They'll reward you for it.

Which of the monetization strategies you pursue depends on your skills, temperament, and aims. If you're only after followers and interaction, you may need a few of them. If you want a full-time career, go back and read about developing your goals.

THE TOOLS

The following are the key tools used by musicians, according to multiple research firms.

BUILD YOUR WEBSITE: Wordpress, Squarespace, Wix, Drupal.

MANAGE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING: Hootsuite, Smarter Queue, Buffer

E-STORES: Shopify, Kungfunation, Topspin

MERCHANDISE AND ARTIST SUPPORT: Bandcamp, Patreon

STREAMING: Spotify, iTunes, Deezer, Soundcloud

RECORD SALES: Amazon, iTunes

"PRESS"

The emphasis on social media does not mean giving up on traditional media and other outlets. Everyone needs one item in their arsenal that used to be common: the promo pack. It can be digital-only but it needs to include: a press release about current activity; one-page bio; physical CD or digital download link; proof of other press coverage you may have gotten; a photo; and your contact info.

A good press release cuts through the noise, convincing writers, editors, or promoters of your credibility and seriousness. "Everything has to be cultivated and everything has to be developed," says Cagan. "It's about longevity and establishing a career for yourself."

Let's say you release your incredible '50s cool-jazz-arrangement of Black Sabbath's "Iron Man." You can shoot your promo pack to jazz magazines, guitar websites, music bloggers, and also heavy metal sites such as blabbermouth.net or metalsucks.com. Starr says all these outlets are categorized as "press" in her office. They might do a story on you, or at least share a social media link to your audio. And, unlike social media, your press release is a message that you create and control. You're not dependent on others defining your work.

Press releases for tours should also be sent to local entertainment weeklies and to the person running their social media arms. Cagan says, "I still work local media. If I know an artist is from Tallahassee, I'll contact the local paper." And, she adds, she works all the little music-specific websites around the country. "The *Houston Press* no longer publishes in print, but it covers a lot of music online."

TIME CAN BE YOUR ENEMY

Every artist I talk to mentions the time commitment of personal marketing and social media. It's a struggle to keep up with the needs of a career on one hand, and the need for a real life and private time to create on the other. This is true even for those with full managerial and publicity support. Prioritizing one's aims and utilizing posting schedules can help you maintain control of your life. Rafferty swears by Smarter Queue, a social media scheduler that lets him dial up his next day's posts ahead of time. Record companies use similar tools. Just because you can communicate any time, anywhere doesn't mean you should. Your fans and even business associates may try to use Twitter and Facebook like email, but if it doesn't work for you, then ignore it. After all, the most important person in the equation is you. Your music comes first. Marketing just gets it out there. AG

There are many ways to play the same chord.



BILL EVANS

Chord Builder

Don't just memorize grips–learn to understand how harmony works

BY GRETCHEN MENN

THE PROBLEM

You've memorized some chord shapes, but don't understand the theory behind their construction or how to transpose, invert, or modify them.

THE SOLUTION

Start by gaining a grasp of chord theory, and then apply that knowledge to the fretboard.

We often start our journey on guitar by learning the basic open chords, and why not? The guitar is a wonderfully flexible instrument that allows for full, rich harmonies with easy fingerings. Yet so many guitarists stop there. They memorize a handful of shapes, maybe a few barre chords, and rob themselves of boundless options right under their fingertips. As in all lessons in this series, we will aim to dismantle a limitation by building a strong foundation of understanding.

Full disclosure: This is a dense lesson. If you've been keeping up with this series and made it this far, you'll be well equipped. But don't be afraid to take a little extra time to digest the concepts.

1 UNDERSTAND THE BUILDING BLOCKS ON THE STAFF

Before we examine chord construction, we first need to take a look at **intervals**, the distances between notes and the building blocks of chords. **Harmonic intervals** are notes played simultaneously, and **melodic intervals** are notes played in succession. Intervals are made up of two parts—a numeric distance and a preceding modifier. The numeric portion can be a unison, a second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or octave (**Example 1**). Any given interval has one of five qualities, with abbreviations shown in parentheses: **perfect** (P), **major** (M), **minor** (m), **augmented** (+), and **diminished** (º).

Let's use the familiar major and natural minor scales as a basis for seeing intervals in context, upwards from the root in the keys of C major (**Example 2**) and C minor (**Example 3**). Notice that the perfect intervals are the same in both the major and minor modes: unison (P1), perfect fourth (P4), perfect fifth (P5), and octave (P8). If you raise a perfect interval by a half step, it becomes augmented, for example C–G♯ (+5). And if you lower a perfect interval by a half step, it becomes diminished, as C–G♭ (º5).

The major and minor intervals are the second, third, sixth, and seventh. Both major and minor scales have a major 2nd (M2) between the root and the second scale degree. The third, sixth, and seventh are the notes that differ. A minor interval compressed by a half step becomes diminished, and a major interval expanded by a half step becomes augmented. That means that in addition to building a minor scale from the

pattern of half and whole steps, you can form it by taking the major scale and lowering the third, sixth, and seventh scale degrees a half step. A minor interval lowered by a half step becomes diminished, while a major interval raised by a half step becomes augmented.

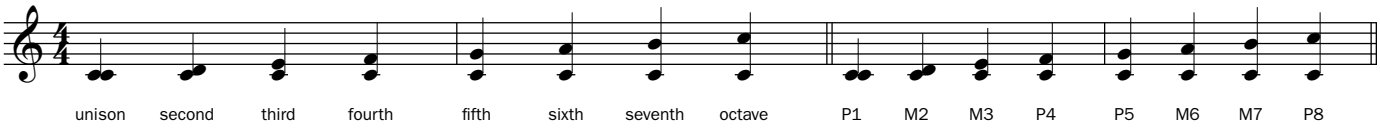
All intervals have levels of **consonance** or **dissonance**, musical rest or tension, respectively. The perfect consonances—the unison, P5, P8—have the least tension. **Imperfect consonances** are major and minor third and sixth. The P4 is a bit of a hybrid—context determines if we hear it as consonant or mildly dissonant. The M2 and m7 are **mild dissonances**, and the m2, M7, and **tritone** are strong dissonances. The tritone (or +4/°5) divides an octave in half. (It's also the blue note in a minor blues scale, as you may remember from the previous lesson.)

Intervals can be **inverted**—the top and bottom note switching places, as shown in **Example 4**. A way to quickly calculate the new interval is to subtract the original interval from the number nine and flip the quality—major becomes minor (and vice versa), perfect remains perfect, and augmented becomes diminished (and vice versa). So a m2 becomes a M7 (9 – 2 = 7; minor becomes major).

2 BUILD SOME TRIADS
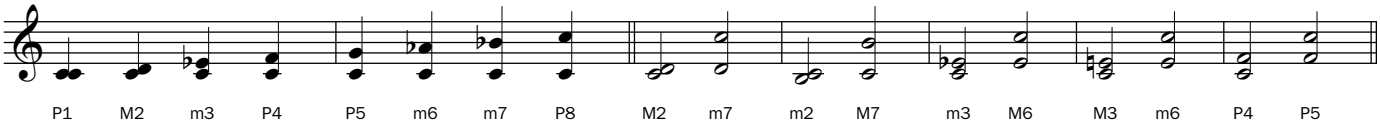
Now let's examine chords in their fundamental form, **triads**, made up of three notes—a root, a third, and a fifth. A triad can be major, minor, augmented, or diminished, and its intervallic structure determines which (**Example 5**). A major triad has a M3 and a P5 above the root. A minor triad has a m3 and a P5. An augmented triad has a M3 and an +5. A diminished triad has a m3 and a °5.

Example 1



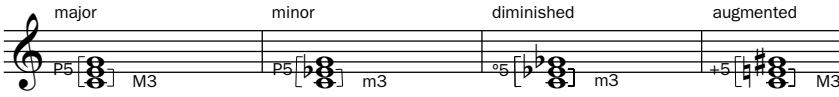
Example 2

Example 3
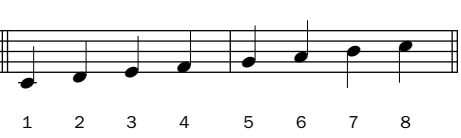


Example 4

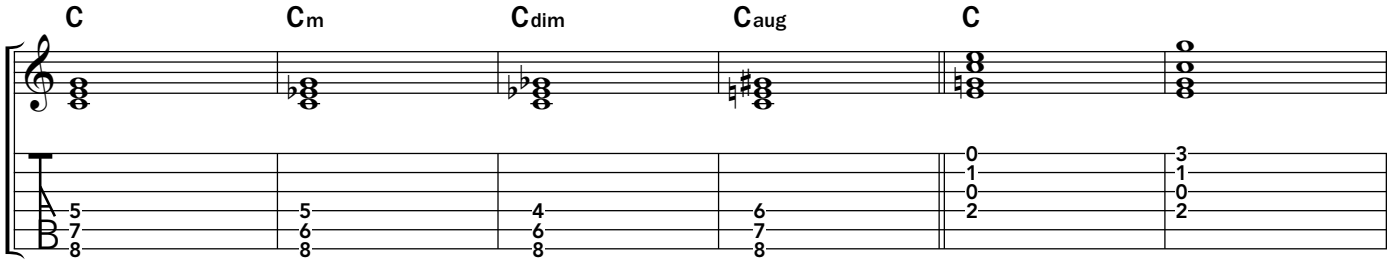
Example 5



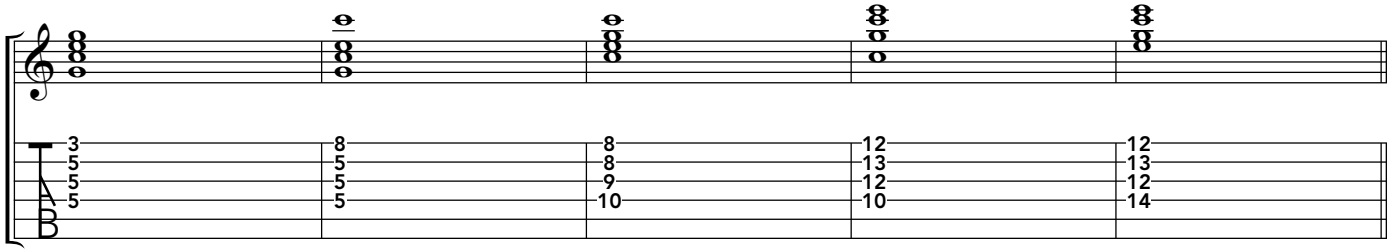
Example 6



Examples 7a–d



Example 8



Put this to practical use by forming various triads with C as the root. First write out the C major scale, as in **Example 6**. Find the major third above the root. Take a moment to see it both as the third degree of the C major scale and as an interval: a M3 is two whole steps—C, whole step up to D, whole step up to E, our major third. Now we need our fifth. Scale degree 5 in a major (or minor) scale is a P5 up from the root. That gives us G as the fifth. Considering it in terms of intervals, a P5 is M3 + m3 (or m3 + M3). So our C major triad is: C–E–G.

Let's transform the C triad to minor: C, a whole step up, to D, and an additional half step to E♭. We still need a P5, so our C minor triad is C–E♭–G. Notice that the only note that C major and C minor triads don't share is the third? We still need a P5 for minor, so our C minor triad is C, Eb, G. Notice how the only note that major and minor don't share is the 3rd? That's why it's often said that the third determines a chord's quality.

Augmented and diminished chords are one more step: To get a triad augmented, take a major triad and raise the 5th a half step: C, E, G#. To get a diminished triad, take a minor triad and lower the 5th by a half step: C, Eb, Gb.

3 TAKE IT TO THE FRETBOARD

For **Example 7a**, locate a C on the low E string. Then find the major third (E) on the A string and the (G) on the D string. C major! Next, lower the third a half step to transform it to C minor, as shown in **Example 7b**. Lower the fifth a half step, to G♭, to form a C diminished chord (**Example 7c**). For **Example 7d**, revert to the C major triad and raise the fifth a half step, to G♯, to form C augmented.

Going a step further, let's work our way up the neck finding C major chords, using the four highest strings and doubling whichever chord tone is most practical in any given position. In **Example 8**, starting in the open position, as our top note we have an open E, the third of C major. Then go to the B string and find another chord tone, in this case, C. The open G is the fifth, and if you fret the E on the D string, you'll see a familiar open chord (minus the C you're probably used to playing on the A string). Continue by moving up the fretboard, finding chord tones, while keeping notes in common when possible. Notice how they connect and invert, all forming C major chords, but with the notes stacked in various ways. You'll need to use your knowledge of the fretboard to be aware of which notes are which.

Your assignment, one that will be enormously helpful, but will require your full engagement: Take these C major chord forms, or **voicings**, and convert them to minor—remember, just find all the thirds (in this case, E), and lower them a half step to E♭. Come up with comfortable fingerings. Then try to memorize the shapes, but only after you really know which note is which, both in terms of pitch and its role in the triad. Then try both major and minor in other keys.

Good luck, and have patience! Your future self with great chord fluency will thank you.

Gretchen Menn is a guitarist and composer based in the San Francisco Bay Area. She writes, records, and performs original music, and is the guitarist of the popular Led Zeppelin tribute band, Zepparella. gretchenmenn.com





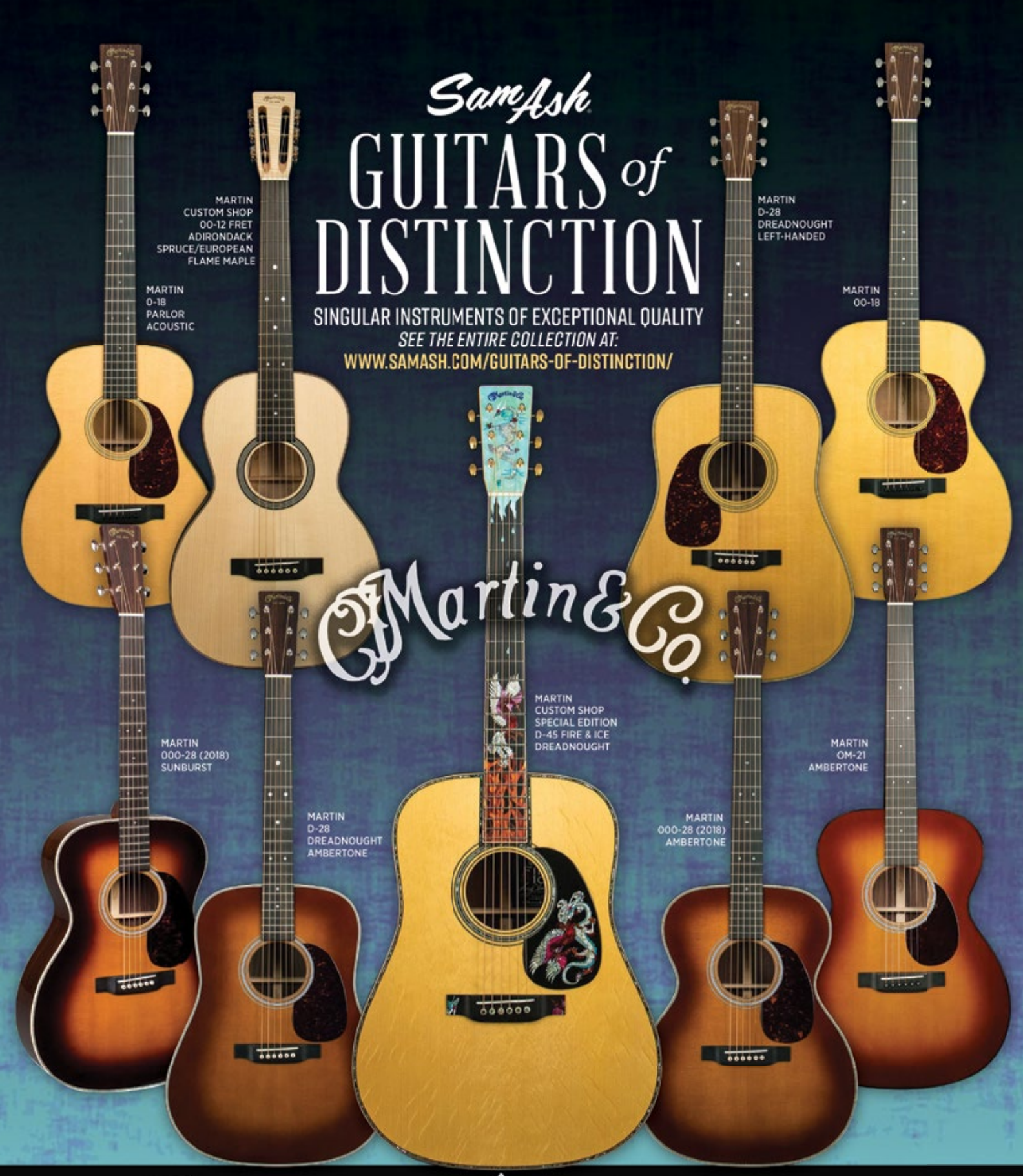
NEW

THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLING ACOUSTIC AMP.
NOW WITH BLUETOOTH® CONNECTIVITY.

The Loudbox Mini is designed to faithfully reproduce the sound of acoustic instruments. With Bluetooth®, you can now easily add backing tracks or other accompaniment to your performances.







SamAsh®

BEST SELECTION ONLINE
LOWEST PRICE GUARANTEE
SPECIAL FINANCING AVAILABLE
SAMASH.COM 1-800-472-6274

VIDEO LESSON
acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019

The Choice Wife

Al Petteway's personal take on a Celtic standard

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

Not long ago, the editors of this magazine decided it was high time to run an arrangement of a Celtic tune, so I emailed the diverse fingerstyle master Al Petteway for suggestions. Sure enough, Petteway replied in moments with a great idea: "O'Farrell's Farewell to Limerick." Using an MP3 he gave me, I prepared Petteway's arrangement in notation, then gave him a call for suggestions on how he might approach teaching it to a student. Our chat turned from the piece's technical intricacies to uncertainty about its title, and Petteway promised to look into it.

Later that day, Petteway emailed, "It's also known as 'An Phis Fhiliuch,' 'An Phis Fliuch,' 'An Phis Fluich,' 'An Phis Phliuch,' 'The Boy in the Bush,' 'The Bridegroom's Delight,' 'The Choice Wife,' 'Feathered Nest,' 'The Good Wife,' 'The Perfect Wife,' 'Pis Fhliuch,' 'The Ready Wife,' and 'The Ready Woman,'" explaining that these titles were colorful euphemisms for a state of female arousal. We settled on "The Choice Wife," the same title Petteway used when he recorded the tune with his wife and duo partner, Amy White, on their 2011 album, *High in the Blue Ridge*.

Traditional Celtic melodies like "The Choice Wife" are as varied in their titles as in their interpretations. In his arrangement for solo guitar, Petteway strikes a good balance between nailing all the traditional mannerisms and putting his own spin on the music. As such, it represents an excellent introduction to fingerstyle Celtic guitar—and a sweet selection to add to your repertoire.

FEELING THE SLIP JIG

Petteway discovered Celtic music in the early 1990s, when he began recording for Maggie's Music, an independent record label with a focus on Celtic music of all eras. In working with musicians like fiddle player Bonnie Rideout and harpist Maggie Sansone, Petteway quickly became steeped in the music. "It was a great education for me," he says. "For Scottish tunes, many of which are in the keys of E and A, I found



myself playing in standard tuning, whereas for Irish tunes, I thought DADGAD worked better. Eventually I learned everything in both tunings!"

Petteway usually plays "The Choice Wife," with its D Mixolydian (D E F♯ G A B C) melody, in DADGAD. The piece is a slip jig—a term that in this case refers to its 9/8 time signature and is also a type of Celtic dance. This meter is very seldom encountered in American popular styles, so it's important to understand it before delving into the piece. In a slip jig, there are nine eighth notes per bar, but Petteway doesn't count all nine beats. "I feel it more like in three [i.e., three dotted quarter notes to the bar], with the biggest emphasis on beat 1 of each measure," he explains.

That said, this is a highly rhythmic tune, and it's especially important to render the rhythms with precision. If 9/8 is an unfamiliar meter to you, it might be a good idea to first count in eighth notes, as shown in **Example 1**, which removes the bass line so you can focus on timing. When you come to understand where each note falls, you'll be able to take off the training wheels and confidently feel the music in three like Petteway.

TACKLING THE ORNAMENTS

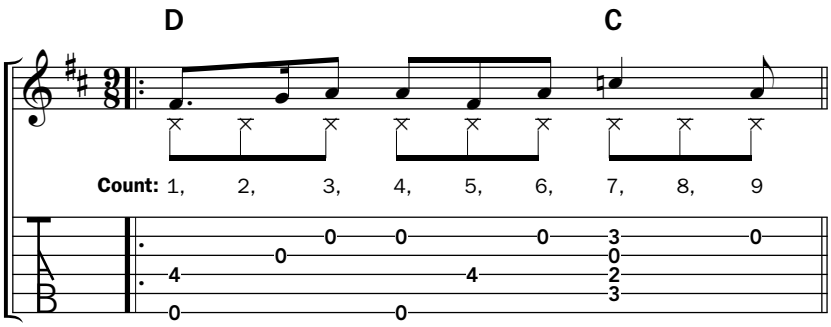
In his arrangement (and in general in his playing) Petteway seeks out the least cumbersome fretting-hand fingerings, using the open strings wherever possible to make the melody sing. At the same time, he adds ornaments, both with the fretting hand and the picking hand, that lend the arrangement its Celtic flavor. Some of these ornaments, like the grace notes in bar 4 and elsewhere, are fairly easy to play—just quickly pull off from a fretted note to an open string.

But the occasional picked 16th-note triplets, which Petteway plays to maintain a sense of forward motion and excitement, can be quite tricky to pull off. To play those in bar 5, for instance, use the picking pattern shown between the staves in the arrangement. (Remember, *p* = thumb, *i* = index finger, *m* = middle, and *a* = ring.) It might be best to isolate this detail, playing it extremely slowly and gradually increasing the tempo until you can cleanly incorporate it with the surrounding music.

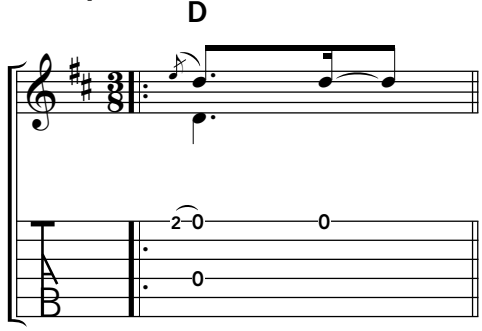
If it's just too hard to play those 16th-note triplets, you could instead play a solution like shown in **Example 2**, which is no less Celtic in character. And don't beat yourself up if you can't do the triplets—they can even cause trouble for no less a player than Petteway, who freely admits, "I've played the piece on stage with Tony McManus at a superfast tempo and just had to throw those triplets out the window." AG

Tuning: D A D G A D
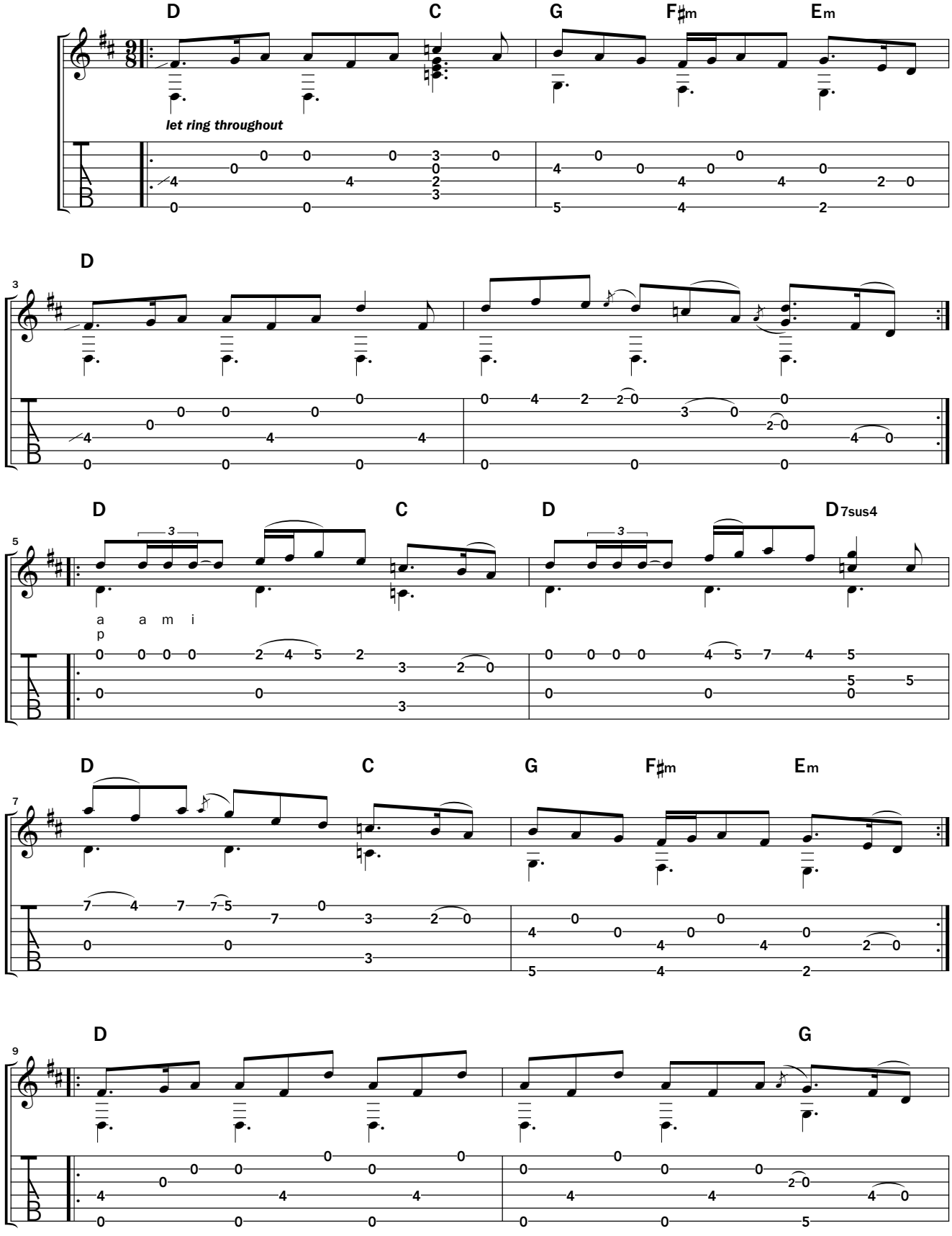
Example 1
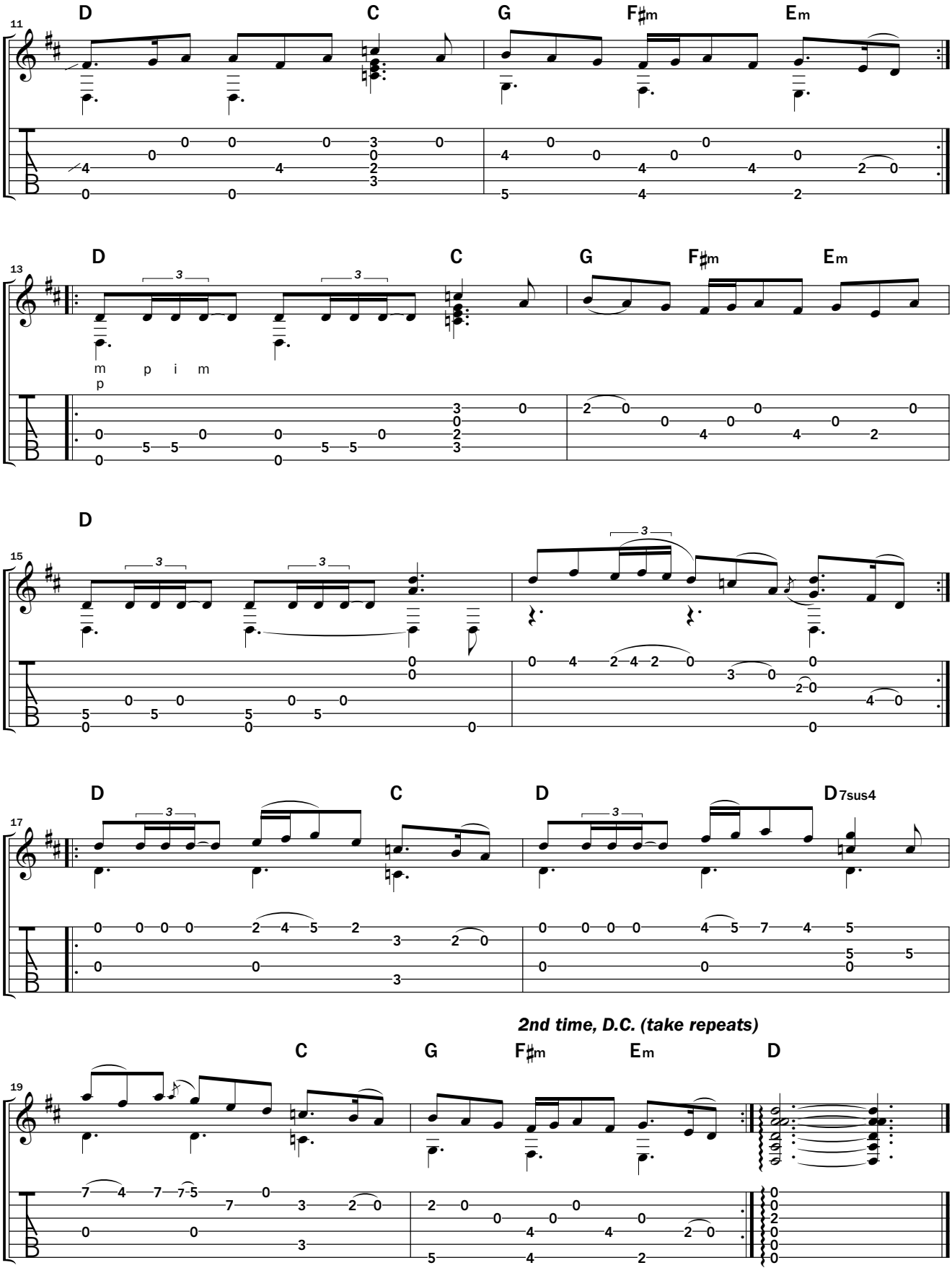


Example 2



Tuning: D A D G A D



Copyright © 2019 Al Petteway. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission


11
D
C
G
F♯m
Em
13
D
C
G
F♯m
Em
m p i m
p
15
D
17
D
C
D
D7sus4
2nd time, D.C. (take repeats)
19
C
G
F♯m
Em
D

A natural harmonic is produced by lightly resting a fretting finger directly above the fret wire.



HUGH O'CONNOR

Chiming In

How to produce harmonics and use them to add new textures to your playing

BY JEFF GUNN

If you've ever paid any attention to the acoustic guitar parts in songs like "Roundabout" by Yes or "Black Mountain Side" by Led Zeppelin, then you're no doubt familiar with the chiming sounds of harmonics. These ringing notes are called natural harmonics and are produced at certain nodes, or locations, on an open string, dividing it into equal parts.

A range of harmonics—natural, harp, percussive, and pinch—can be used on guitar in conjunction with conventionally fretted notes and open strings to create beautiful effects and textures. Many guitarists include natural harmonics in transitional passages between vocal phrases or song sections, but learning how to play all kinds of harmonics—and combining them in different ways—will open new avenues of expression on the acoustic guitar.

In this lesson, you'll learn how each type of harmonic is produced, how it's commonly notated, and how it can be used to add textural interest to your playing.

WEEK ONE

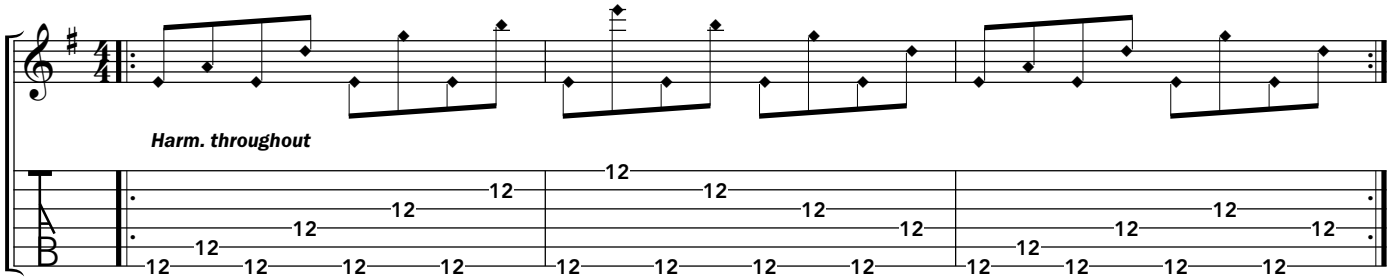
A natural harmonic is produced by lightly resting a fretting finger directly *above* the fret wire—not between the frets, as in conventional fretting. Natural harmonics are most commonly played at the 12th, seventh, and fifth frets, producing pitches an octave, an octave plus a fifth, and two octaves, respectively, above the open strings. (Less commonly, harmonics are played at locations like the fourth and ninth frets.)

Begin by trying some harmonics at the 12th fret (**Example 1**), as they're the easiest to produce. You can use any fretting finger, but I recommend a third-finger barre. Remember not to use too much pressure—do not press down on the string(s) as you would when fretting. If you're properly playing the harmonics, you should get a brilliant chiming sound. **Example 2** brings strummed harmonics at the 12th and seventh frets into play, producing Em7 and Em7/B chords. Again, use your fretting hand's third finger to produce the harmonics, and strum as you normally would.

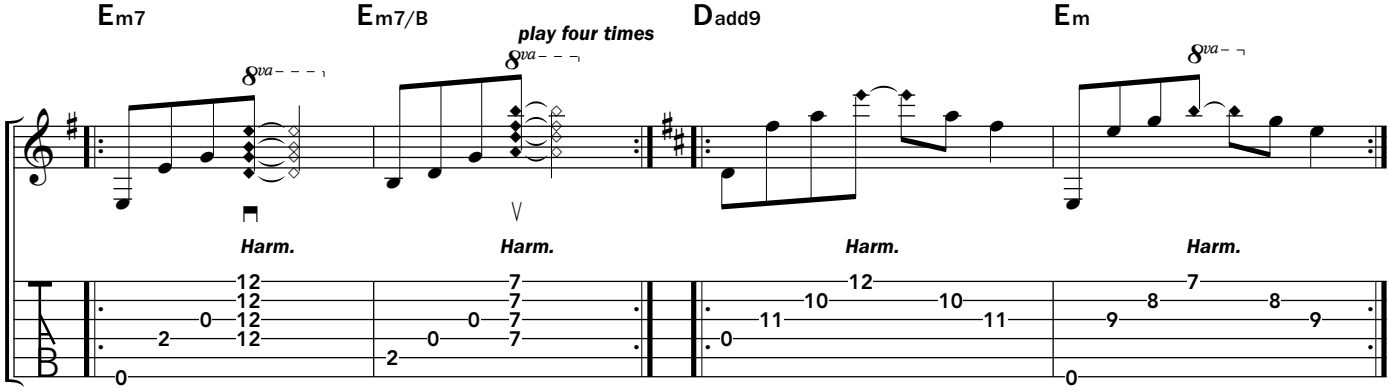
In **Example 3**, you'll find another common approach to natural harmonics. Here they're interspersed with fretted notes and open strings to outline a Dadd9–Em progression. Play the 12th-fret harmonic in bar 1 with your fourth finger and the seventh-fret harmonic in the following measure with your first finger. After you've worked through this week's examples, try experimenting with harmonics on your own in all locations on the fretboard.

WEEK 1

Example 1



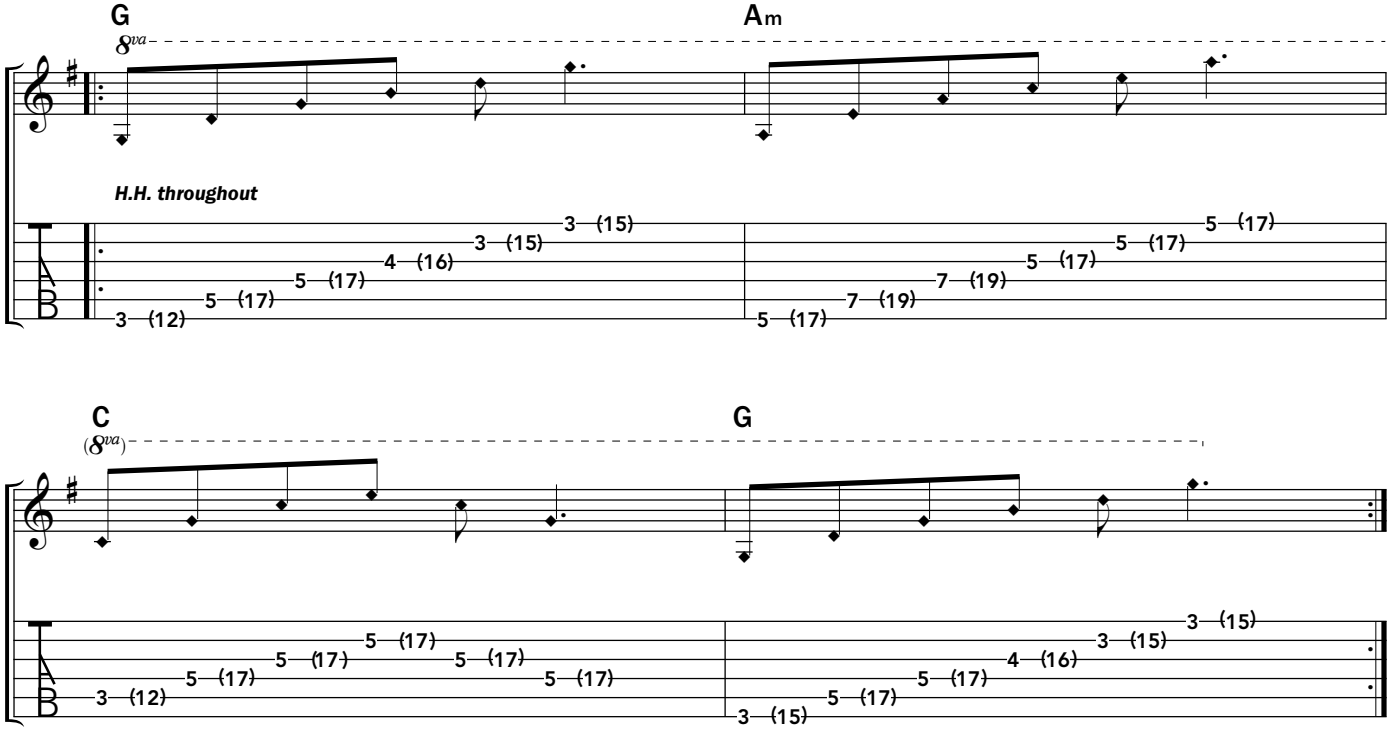
Example 2



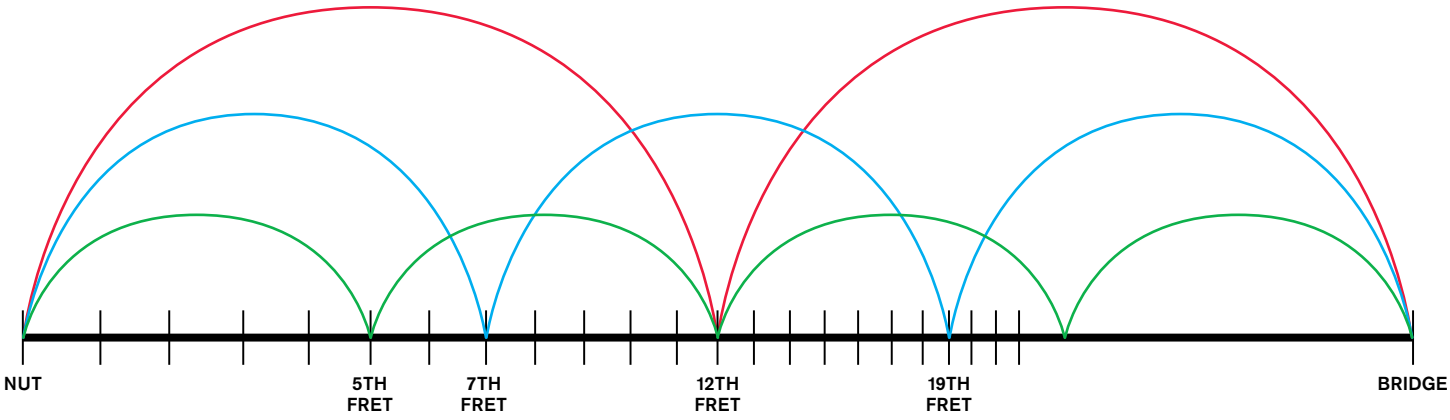
Example 3

WEEK 2

Example 4



Natural harmonics are fractions of the string length.



WEEK TWO

Harp harmonics, also known as artificial harmonics, differ from natural harmonics in that they're based on fretted notes, rather than open strings. Country and jazz guitarists Chet Atkins and Lenny Breau were known for their masterly and extensive use of this harmonic type. You can create a harp harmonic by taking any fretted note, and, using your picking hand's index finger, lightly touching the string 12 frets higher, again directly above the fret wire, while picking the string with your thumb or other available finger. (Harp harmonics can also be produced five or seven frets above a fretted note, but these are less common.) In tablature, the fretted note is indicated as usual, while the location of the harp harmonic is shown in parentheses to the right.

Example 4 illustrates a typical chord progression in the key of G major—G–Am–C–G—produced entirely with artificial harmonics. To play this figure, fret basic barre chords throughout. Hold down each chord shape for the duration of its measure, letting all the notes ring together while you play the harp harmonics 12 frets higher. Play them so that each note rings clearly and cleanly.

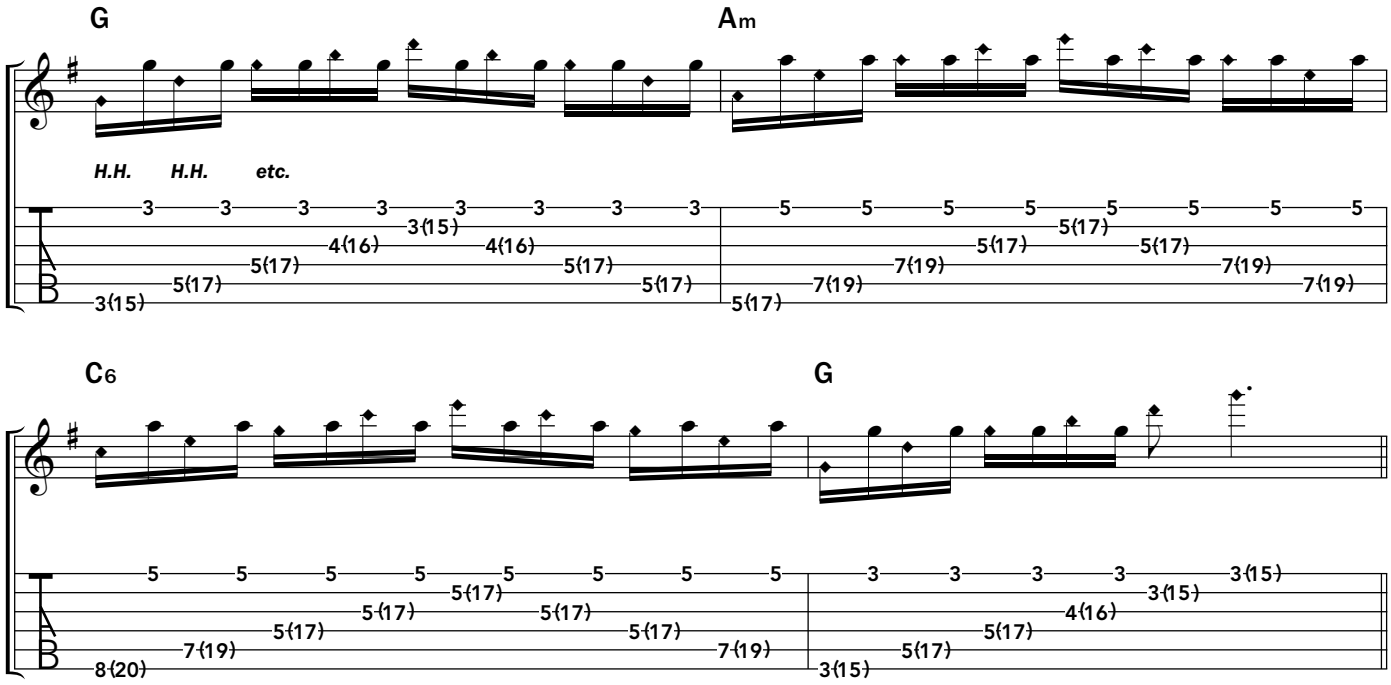
Beginners' Tip #1

When playing natural harmonics, place your fretting finger(s) directly above the fretboard, rather than between the frets. And try exploring natural harmonics at locations other than frets 5, 7, and 12.

Beginners' Tip #2

A striking way to decorate any barre chord is to arpeggiate it using a combination of fretted notes and harp harmonics, using Example 5 as a benchmark.

Example 5



Maintain this 12-fret distance in **Example 5**, in which you'll play the same progression as Ex. 4, but with a different picking pattern, as well as an interesting combination of harp harmonics and fretted notes. Now try experimenting with harp harmonics over your own favorite chord progressions.

WEEK THREE

Though it might seem impossible, you can strum entire chords using harp harmonics. That's the focus of this week's exercises. To play **Example 6**, based on an Am11–Gm11 progression, start by barring all six strings at the fifth fret with your index finger. Play the first four notes as you learned last week, producing the harp harmonics 12 frets higher with your picking hand's index finger and picking them with your thumb. Then—and here's the tricky part—in one continuous downward motion, from string 6 to string 1, play the harmonics with your index finger while simultaneously picking them with your thumb.

For the second measure, move the barre down to fret 3, and play the first four notes in the same way you did those in the previous measure. But this time, play the chord on beat 3 in the opposite direction, from string 1 to string 6, picking the harmonics with your ring finger, rather than index.

Now I'd like to show you how to do some percussive harmonics—an essential technique of innovative acoustic guitarists like Michael Hedges, Kaki King, and Andy McKee. In **Example 7**, I use these harmonics to decorate a little progression in the key of E minor. These are natural harmonics, fingered exactly like those introduced in Week 1. The percussive aspect comes from the picking hand—slap your thumb on the strings to play the harmonics, while also creating a nice drum-like sound. (Note that in the video, on the repeat, I play the harmonics at the 19th fret on the Bm11 chord. The harmonics in this location sound at the same pitch as those at the seventh fret.)

Tap harmonics, also used by Hedges, et al., are an interesting variation on harp harmonics. Like harp harmonics, they're based on fretted notes. But as the name suggests, they're articulated by tapping—or hammering—and not picking. To play a tap harmonic, start with a fretted note and eyeball the note 12 (or seven or five) frets higher on the same string. Then, with your picking hand's middle finger, hammer down firmly, directly on the fret wire of the

Beginners' Tip #3

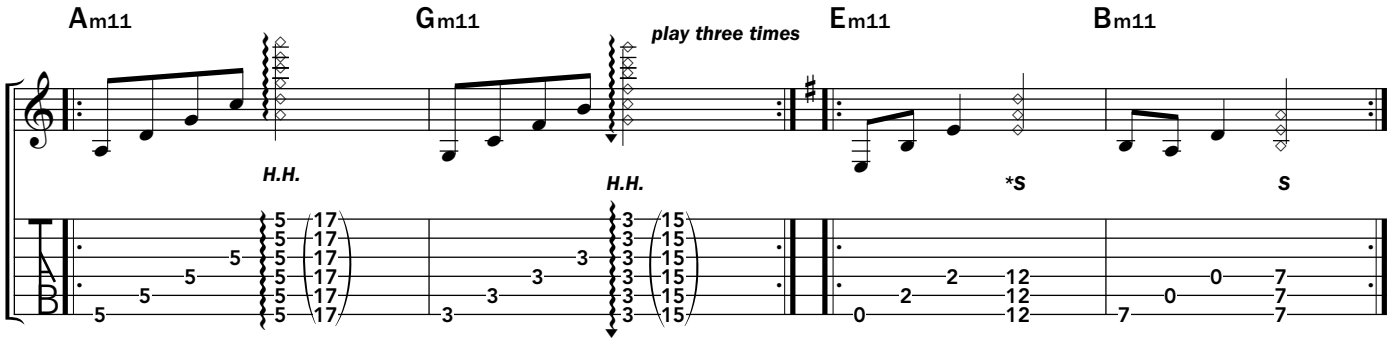
Once you've learned how to produce tap harmonics on single notes, as in Example 8, try them on full chords. For instance, form a G barre chord in third position, and, with your picking hand's first finger above all six strings, slap down on the strings at the 15th fret.

Beginners' Tip #4

Try to come up with new chord voicings using both harmonics and fretted notes. For example, if your stop the eighth-fret C on string 6 with your first finger and use your fourth finger to barre the harmonics on strings 5–1 at the 12th fret, you get the colorful chord of Cmaj13.

WEEK 3

Example 6

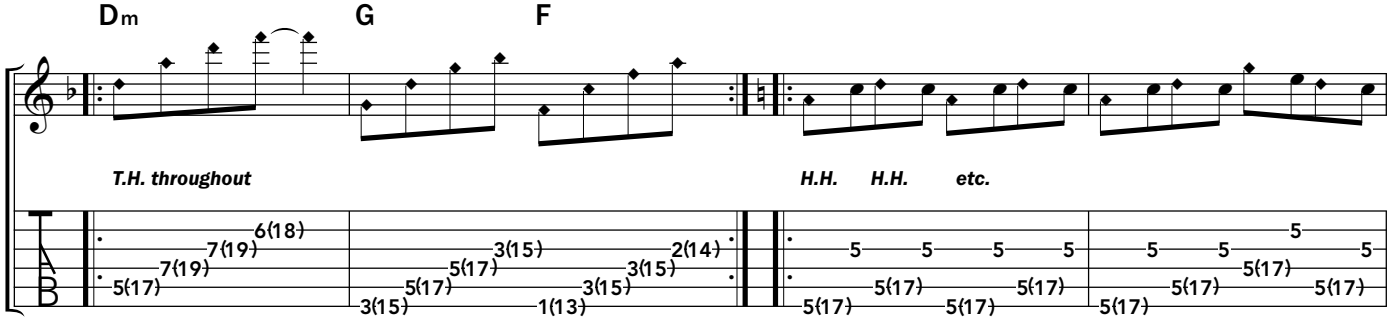


Example 7

*Sound harmonics by slapping strings with picking-hand thumb.

WEEK 4

Example 8



Example 9

Cont. on p. 52

higher fret, and quickly remove your middle finger from the string, sounding the harmonic. **Example 8** shows tap harmonics in the context of a chordal etude in D minor. Remember to hold down each chord shape with your fretting hand for as long as possible.

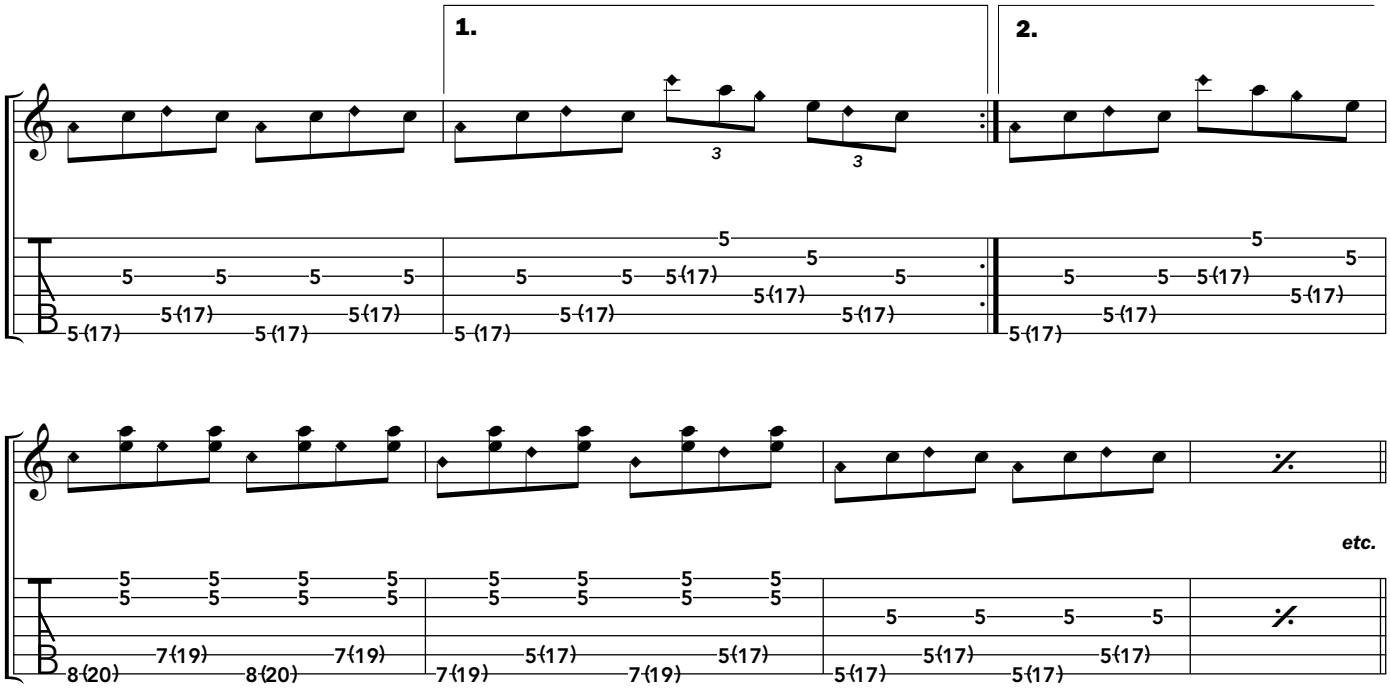
WEEK FOUR

In **Example 9** you'll find an excerpt from the beginning of my composition "Candle Lanterns," for solo guitar, which will put your newfound harp-harmonic technique to use in a more extended passage. (For a free download of notation for the full piece, head to jeffgunnmusic.com.) To play the example, keep your fretting hand's first finger barred at the fifth fret throughout. Taking things slowly, sound each harp harmonic with precision, making sure to maintain a 12-fret relationship between each fretted note and its harmonic. Also, listen carefully to ensure that the harmonics sound at equal volume to the picked fretted notes, and that everything rings together smoothly.

Now that you've spent four weeks with harmonics of all types, don't forget to continue to explore them in your own music. You'll be a more interesting guitarist for it.

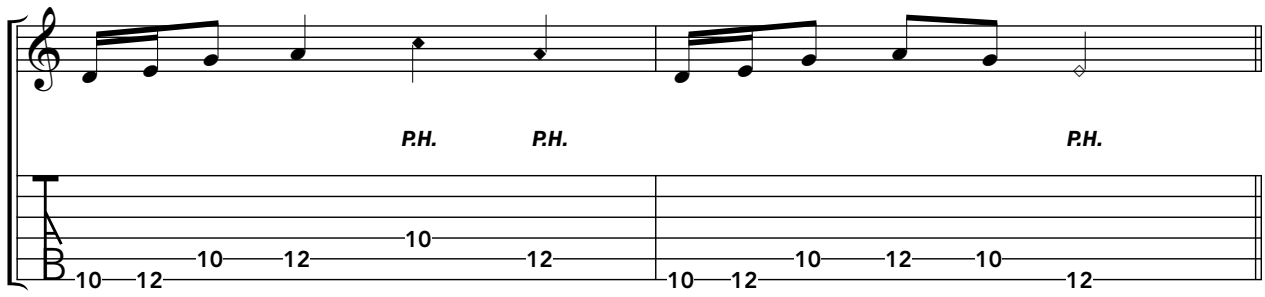
Jeff Gunn is author of the series Hidden Sounds: Discover Your Own Method on Guitar *as well as the guitarist and musical director for Emmanuel Jal. His album* Sonic Tales *will be released this year. jeffgunnmusic.com*

Cont. from p. 51



TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Pinch harmonics are most commonly associated with distorted electric guitars and players like ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons, but they can also be used to draw unexpected sounds from the acoustic guitar. To play a pinch harmonic, use a flatpick, adding a bit of the flesh of your thumb to the pick attack, such that a squealing sound is produced. In the example shown here, an A minor pentatonic (A C D E G) riff is decorated with pinch harmonics.



5 Ways for Guitarists to Develop Their Ear

By Jared Meeker



PLAYING MUSIC CAN OFTEN BE RELATED to the visual elements such as clothing and appearances, the shape of chords up and down the guitar neck, and reading guitar tablature and notation. However, any great guitarist and musician will tell you that it all comes down to having a well-trained ear. I had an opportunity to meet Robert Montgomery, Wes Montgomery's son, who told me stories about how his dad didn't read music and would learn extremely complex songs and note-for-note solos *by ear*. This kind of listening led him to understand the highest level of jazz harmony by relying on his hearing and formulating his own vocabulary. It can be said for many great studio guitarists that they can hear melodies, chord progressions, and forms and play them back instantly. How can a guitarist progress and practice developing their ear?

1. Sing What You Play

One of the most important techniques is to allow notes to vibrate through you by singing them. If you are new to this, play a note on your guitar and then sing it back. Was it the exact note in the same register, or was it sharp or flat? Try to match precisely and, as you improve, eventually you can improvise anything on the guitar and match it with your voice. Often you can hear guitar greats doing this where they solo and sing with it. Once you have that mastered, try to harmonize with yourself—playing a scale on guitar and harmonizing it with your voice (for example, singing a third above).

2. Listen to the Individual Elements

When some people listen to music, it is just part of the background—they listen to the singer's words and melody but the accompanying instruments are in the distance. There is so much more going on. First of all, there are five elements of music to be aware of: melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, and form. When you listen to music, be acutely aware of how these elements are used and combined. How is the melody shaped and contoured? What are the chord relationships and how do they evolve through time? What kinds of rhythms are being used by every instrument and do they contrast in different sections of the song? What is the timbre or quality of each instrument, the effects, natural tone and range, and equalization that are used? What is the form of the song from the beginning to the end and how many sections are there?

3. Practice Ear-Training Exercises

Ear-training exercises are essential for the developing musician. There are some great websites that feature a variety of theory-related lessons and ear-training interactive players. You should test yourself on the following topics: note intervals, chord qualities, rhythm dictation, and melody dictation. Let's talk about each independently.

- ♫ Interval ear-training will help you hear and recognize the distances between notes, typically all 12 notes and their multiple spellings. This is particularly helpful when figuring out melodies. At a gig or studio session when an artist or producer plays a melody, you need to be able to pick it up immediately without fumble.
- ♫ Chord qualities are hearing a type of chord, (typically four triads types and about 7 seventh chord types, built from any root). You should be able to identify the chord the first time, but in the beginning you may need to hear it several times or each note of the chord played separately.
- ♫ For rhythmic dictation, record yourself clapping out a few rhythms—start slow with just one measure, but for more advanced training, do several measures—then write out the rhythm on a sheet of paper.
- ♫ Finally, for melodic dictation do the same thing. Record notes in time and then listen back and write out your melody. Start with only a few notes in a short phrase but, after you improve on transcribing, try longer phrases of four measures or more.

4. Reading Music That You're Not Familiar With

This is just how it sounds: practice reading and understanding the notes on a page and how they turn into sound. Similarly to the previous lessons, it will get easier the more you do it. Eventually all the musical elements will come together and you will see the notes, intervals, and chords on the page and know how they sound before you play them.

5. Transcribing Note-for-Note

Everyone has his or her favorite players and musicians. If you'd like to learn from them, the best way is to play along. Often you can write down the notes, chords, and rhythms to understand them better, but listening, learning, and playing along is good enough. Be careful to notice all the inflections, bends, and ornaments. There may already be great transcriptions and charts out there, but figuring it out on your own will make you internalize it more.

Think about great musicians with an incredible musical memory like Wes Montgomery, who had all the melodies and chords of a night stored in his mind, or Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart who could hear a full symphony and go home and write down what he heard. That musical memory is related to ear-training and identifying in a deeper way how you process sound.



Jared Meeker is a Los Angeles-based guitarist, composer, producer, educator, and author who has performed throughout the world. He has authored several books for Alfred Music, been featured in top guitar magazines, and has worked with a wide array of popular music artists in the studio and on stage, having performed at many legendary clubs, festivals, and arenas.

Want more guitar tips & tricks? Visit **alfred.com/acoustic**

Alfred Music
LEARN • TEACH • PLAY

STRINGLETTER TRAVEL

Experience the culture of fascinating destinations in small group settings with expert guides, always with the focus on music.

EXPERIENCE IRELAND AND ITS MUSIC AS THE LOCALS DO





EXPLORE THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF SPAIN





JOIN US FOR A MUSICAL JOURNEY THROUGH CUBA





"I have traveled a lot, but never before with a focus on music. That focus made this particular trip into one I will never forget. Just go!"

—MONICA
JANUARY 2018 PARTICIPANT

LEARN MORE AT STRINGLETTER.COM/TRAVEL

ACOUSTIC GUITAR DRUM! CLASSICAL GUITAR Ukulele STRINGS

WATCH FLEETWOOD MAC PLAY "LANDSLIDE" LIVE
acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019

Prime Mac (L to R): Mick Fleetwood, Lindsey Buckingham, Stevie Nicks, Christine McVie, John McVie



DAVID LACHAPELLE

Landslide

A Fleetwood Mac classic, distilled to its essence

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

In 1973, the singer-songwriter Steve Nicks, then 27, had been supporting herself for years by waitressing and housecleaning, and felt old and tired, as she told *The New York Times* in a 2014 interview. Nicks channeled her weariness into the song "Landslide," which would be released on her band Fleetwood Mac's self-titled 1975 album, at which point her days in the service industry were long past.

"Landslide," with its gently rolling arpeggios and moderate clip, has earned its status as one of the great ballads in the rock canon. Though the original recording is built from layered, interlocking acoustic guitars, for your convenience I've arranged it here for a single instrument, which is just as effective. The song is fingered in the key of C major, with a modulation at the chorus to G major, and with a capo at the third fret causing it to sound in E♭ and B♭—which is unusual for rock.

Begin learning "Landslide" by polishing off the intro's two-bar pattern. Hold down each chord shape for two beats, letting it all ring throughout, while picking the notes on strings 5 and 4 with your thumb, and those on the higher strings with your index and middle fingers. Note that the straight-16th-note rhythmic action is disrupted by an eighth note on the *and* of beats 2 and 4 in each measure, so take care not to rush those spots.

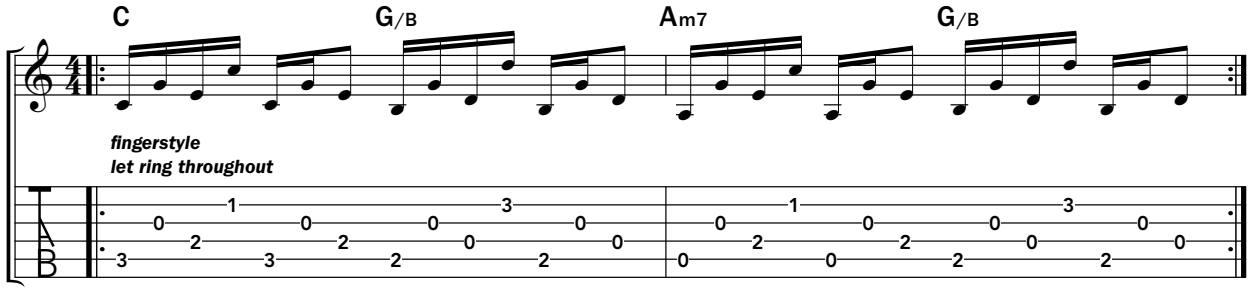
Once you can play the intro cleanly, commit it to memory, as it also forms the bulk of the verse. Heads up on the first ending, where the G/B chord is delayed by a beat, appearing on beat 4.

The chorus is a little trickier to play than the intro and verse. This new section introduces simultaneously picked notes on the treble and bass strings, embellished with hammer-ons and pull-offs. As with the previous sections, the chord shapes themselves don't really require explanation, though I would suggest that you use either your second finger or thumb to play the low F♯ on the D7/F♯ chord—whichever is more comfortable for you. But the chorus will benefit from slow and intentional practicing—make sure that the hammered-on and pulled-off notes aren't swallowed by the bass notes, and that these slurs also fall correctly in time.

The original studio recording of "Landslide" features an electric guitar solo, rendered expertly by Lindsey Buckingham (who also handled the acoustic guitars on the track). It's played without a capo, and incorporates string bends that are easy to produce on the electric but not so much on the acoustic. Because it's such an attractive solo, I've arranged it here for the steel-string, with a capo at the third fret to match the rest of the song, using slides and hammer-ons instead of bends. Check out how Buckingham's lyricism and restraint make the solo an essential part of this classic song. AG

***Capo III**
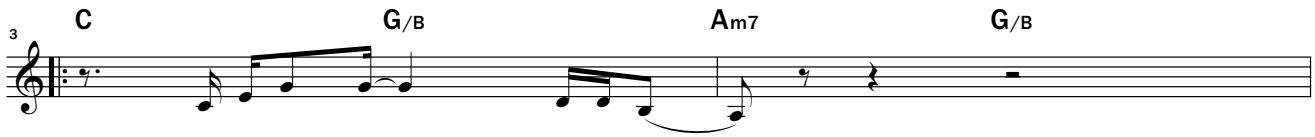
Intro
Moderately
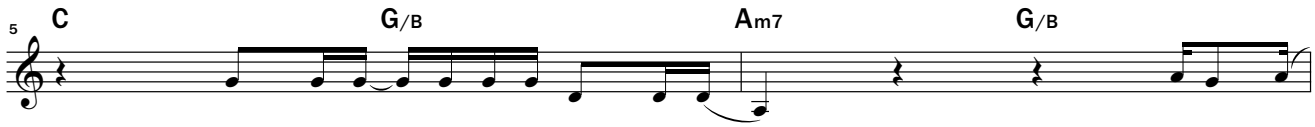


***Music sounds a minor third higher than written.**

𝄋 Verse
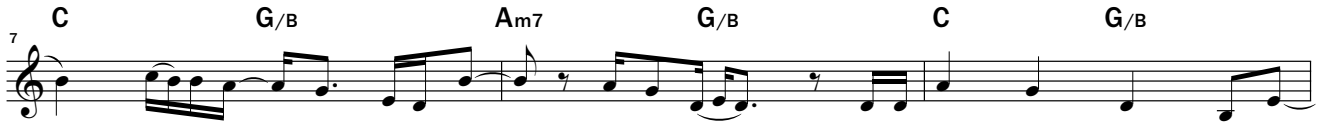
Guitar cont. simile



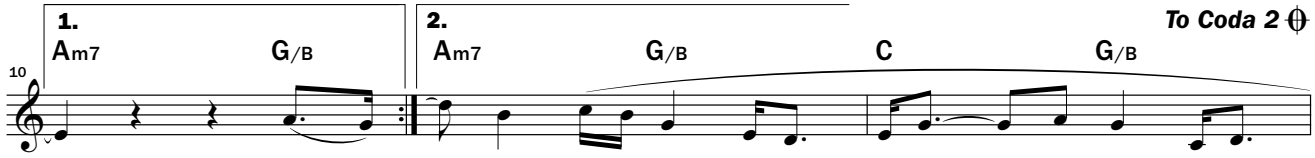
1. I took my love, took it down.
mir - ror in the sky, what is love? Can the child
3. *See additional lyrics*



Climbed a moun - tain and I turned a - round. And I saw
with - in my heart rise a - bove? Can I sail
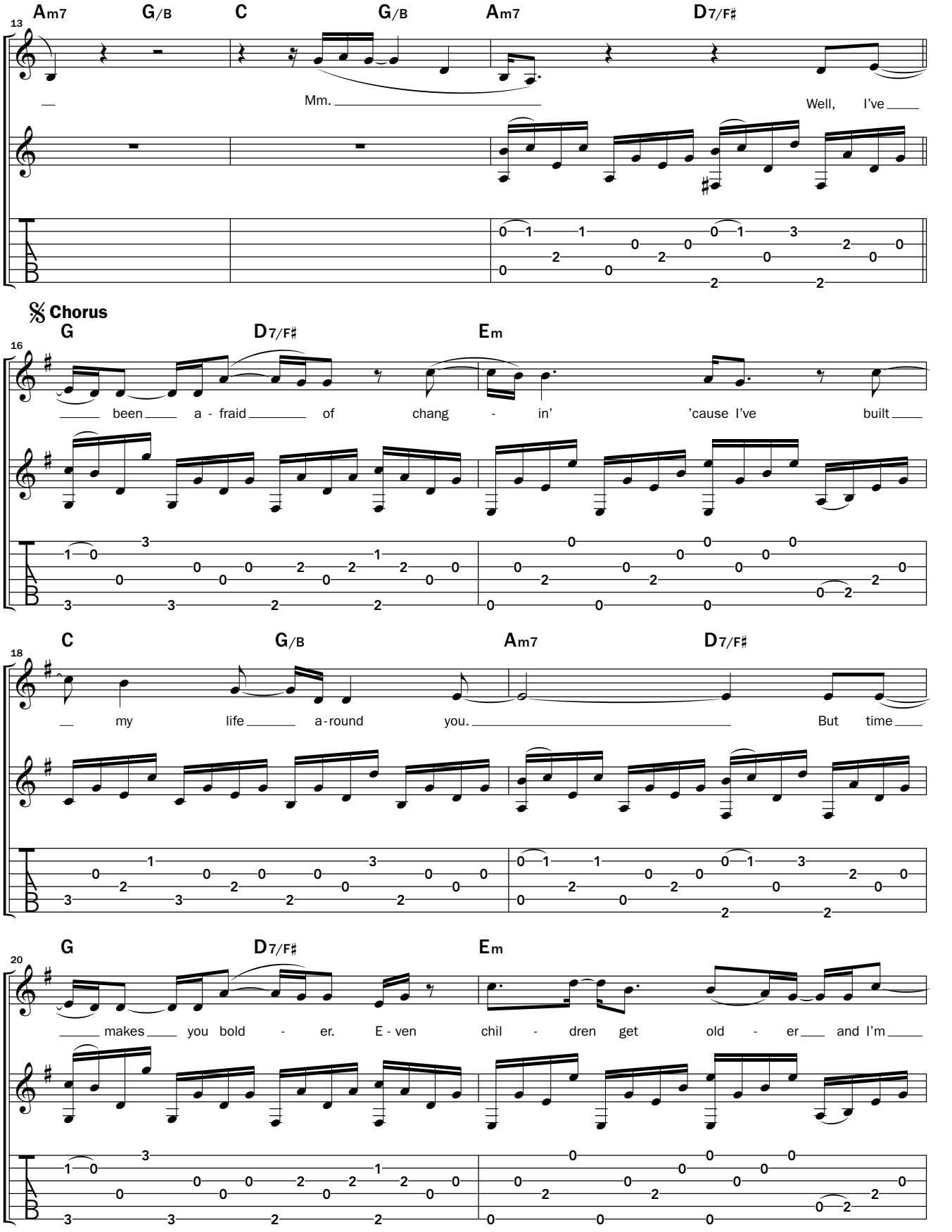


my re - flec - tion in the snow - cov - ered hills till the land - slide brought me down.
through the chang - ing o - cean tides? Can I han - dle the sea - sons of



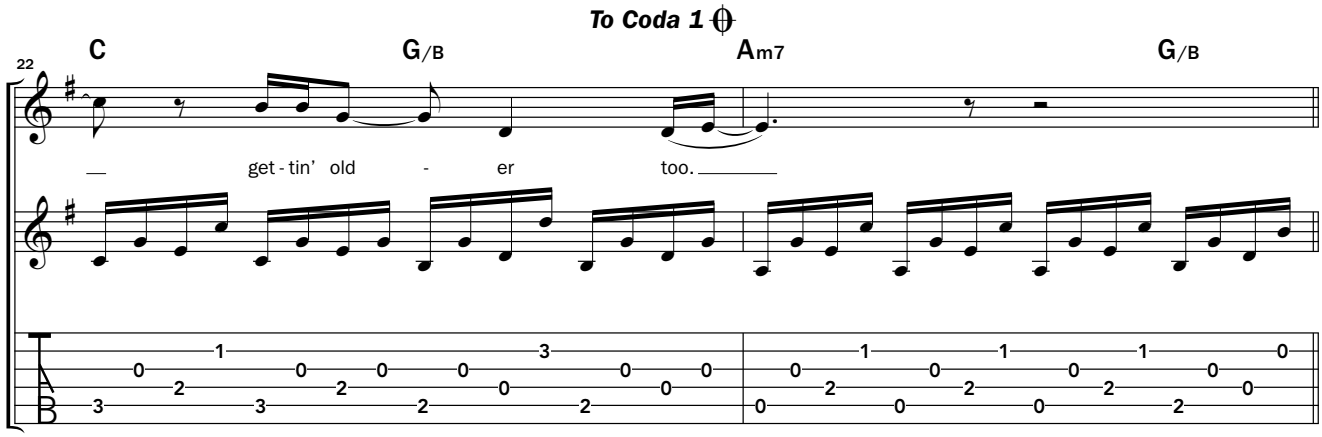
2. Oh, my life?

Copyright © 1975 Welsh Witch Music. Copyright Renewed. All Rights Administered by Songs of Kobalt Music Publishing. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission. *Reprinted by permission of Hal Leonard LLC.*

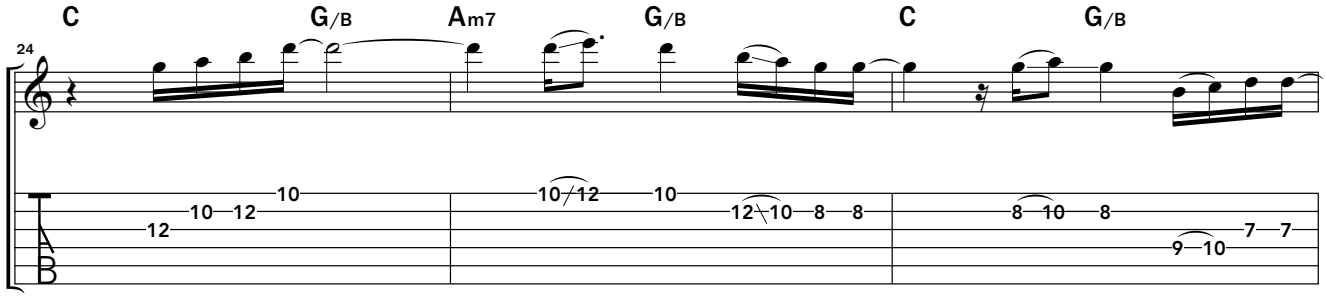

Am7 G/B C G/B Am7 D7/F♯
13
Mm.
Well, I've
𝄋 Chorus
G D7/F♯ Em
16
been a - fraid of chang - in' 'cause I've built
C G/B Am7 D7/F♯
18
my life a-round you. But time
G D7/F♯ Em
20
makes you bold - er. E - ven chil - dren get old - er and I'm

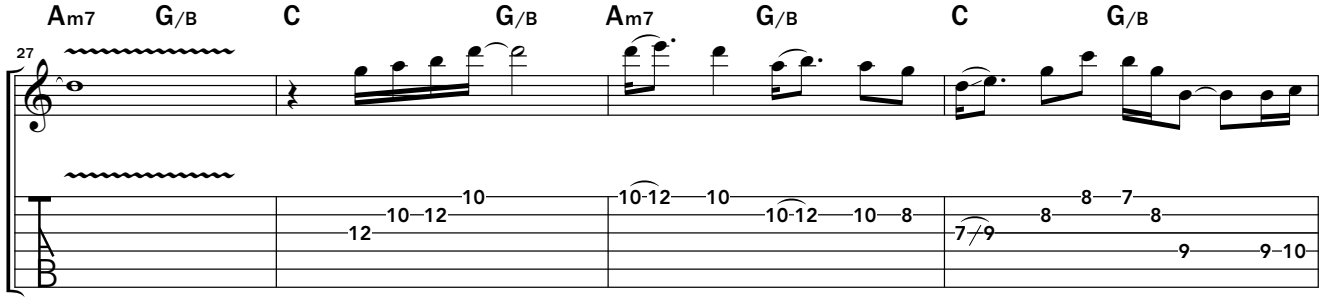
Cont. on p. 58

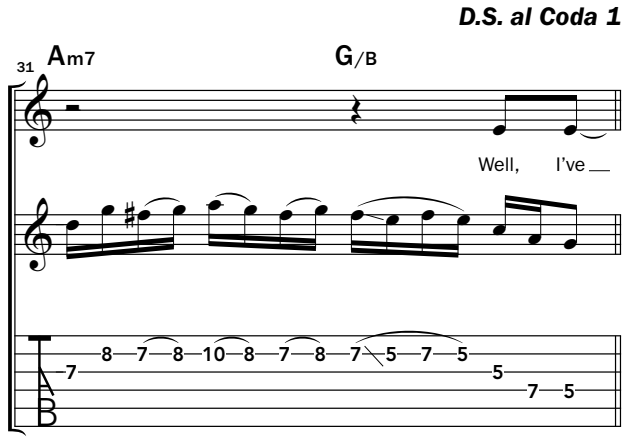
Cont. from p. 57

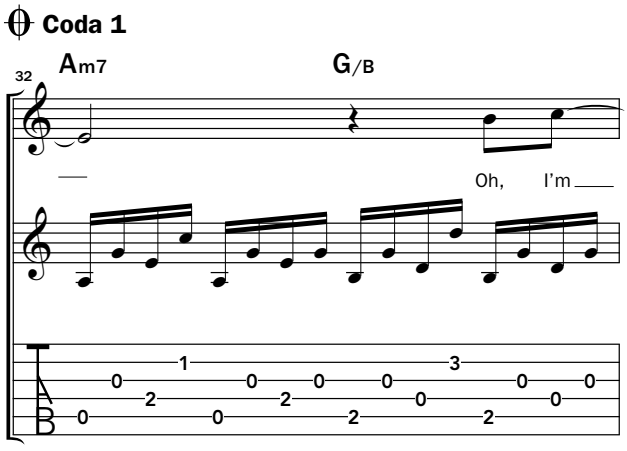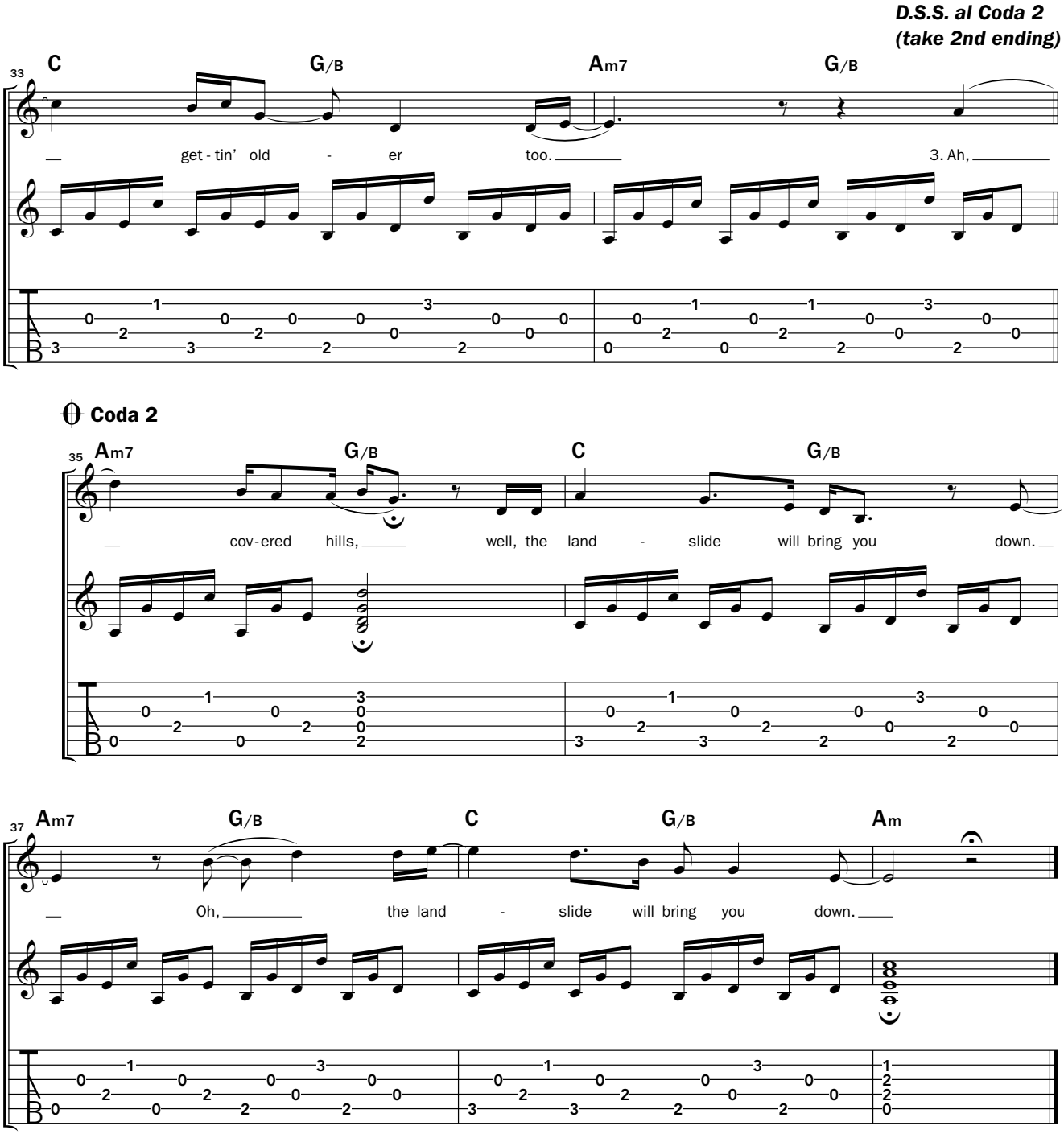


Guitar Solo











3. Ah, take my love, take it down
Ah, climb a mountain and turn around
And if you see my reflection in the snow-covered hills
Well, the landslide will bring it down
And if you see my reflection in the snow-covered hills
Well, the landslide will bring you down
Oh, the landslide will bring you down

SEE THE 1999 "PINK MOON" VW COMMERCIAL
acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019

Pink Moon

Intimate glimpse of an idiosyncratic songwriter

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER



Nick Drake

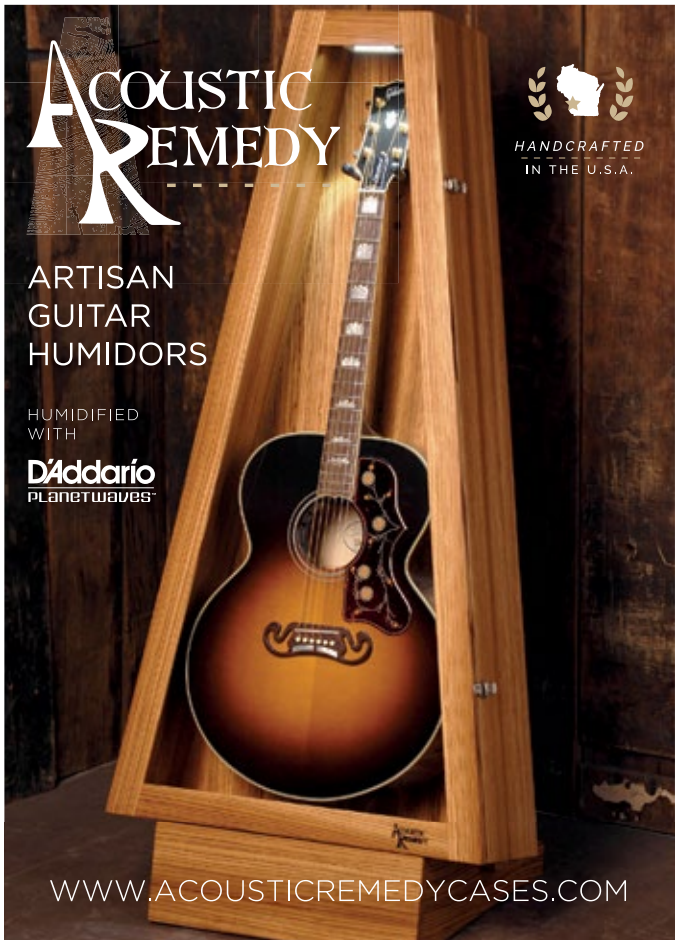
Thanks to its use in a 1999 Volkswagen commercial, "Pink Moon," the title track from Nick Drake's final album (released in February 1972), may be his best-known work. Many of Drake's songs feature rich, chamber-like arrangements, but save for eight bars of spare piano, "Pink Moon" spotlights Drake alone with his guitar, and so it offers an intimate glimpse of the late singer-songwriter's idiosyncratic approach to the instrument.

"Pink Moon" is played in an open Cadd4 tuning (C G C F C E), with a capo at the second fret causing everything to sound a major second higher than written, and the original recording sounds slightly sharp. (For more on this tuning, see the Nick Drake feature lesson on page 22.) The song starts off with an open C chord that, while decorated in interesting ways, is easy on the fretting hand. You can form the shapes in bars 1 and 2 with just one digit: use either your first or second finger to stop the second-fret G on string 3. Then, shift this one-finger shape to the bottom three strings, highlighting the Ds on strings 4 and 6, and the A on string 5. As for your other hand, note that while Drake tended to fingerpick, he apparently strummed "Pink Moon" with his fingernails, but you can play it just as effectively with a plectrum.

In the verse, the open-string texture established in the intro yields to a tighter sound as the V and IV chords (G and F, respectively), played with full barre formations, are brought into play. But rather than straight major triads, there is subtle movement within each chord—with the simple transfer of the third finger from string 3, fret 9 to string 2, fret 9, for instance, the G chord becomes Gsus2/4.

In order to play the verse (and indeed the whole song) effectively, it's best to strum in a continuous up-and-down, 16th-note motion, hitting the strings only on selected beats. You might try counting "One-ee-and-uh, two-ee-and-uh," etc., to help with timing. In bar 3, you would then strike the strings on beat 1, the "uh" of 1, beat 2, the "ee" of 2, and the "and" of 2, etc. Strive for rhythmic accuracy, but don't be overly rigid, as the song is best played with a somewhat loose strum.

Once you've learned "Pink Moon," be sure to spend time exploring its unusual tuning—which can be a great source of inspiration for new ideas. AG





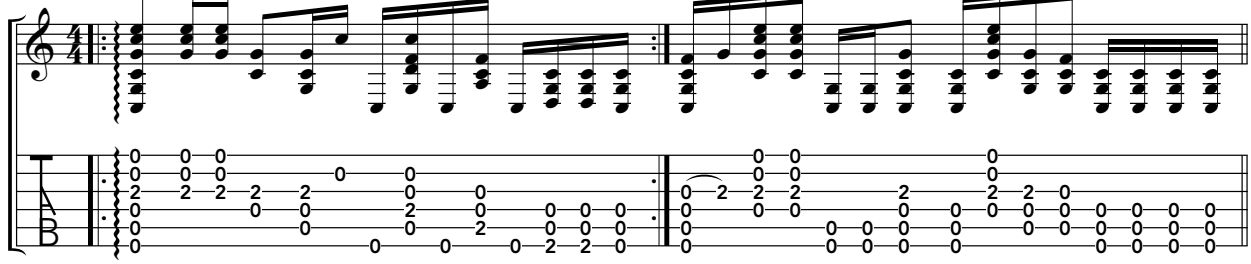
***Tuning: C G C F C E, capo II**

Intro

Moderately slow

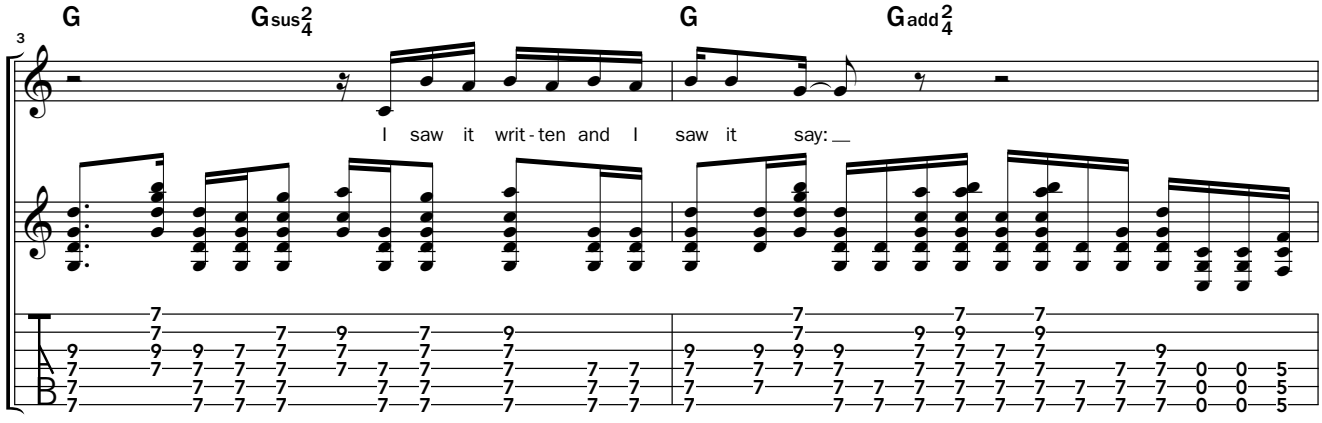
C

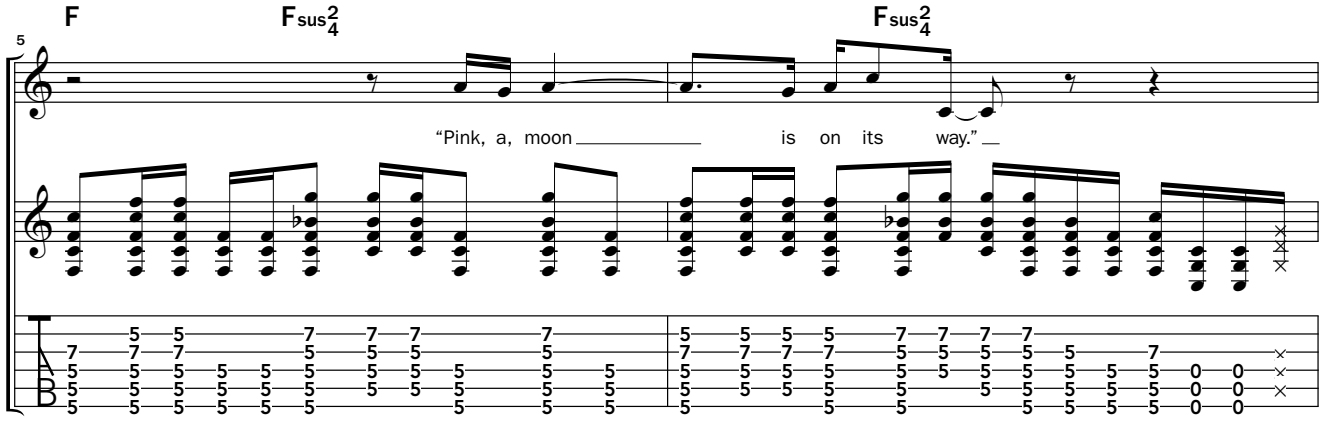
play three times



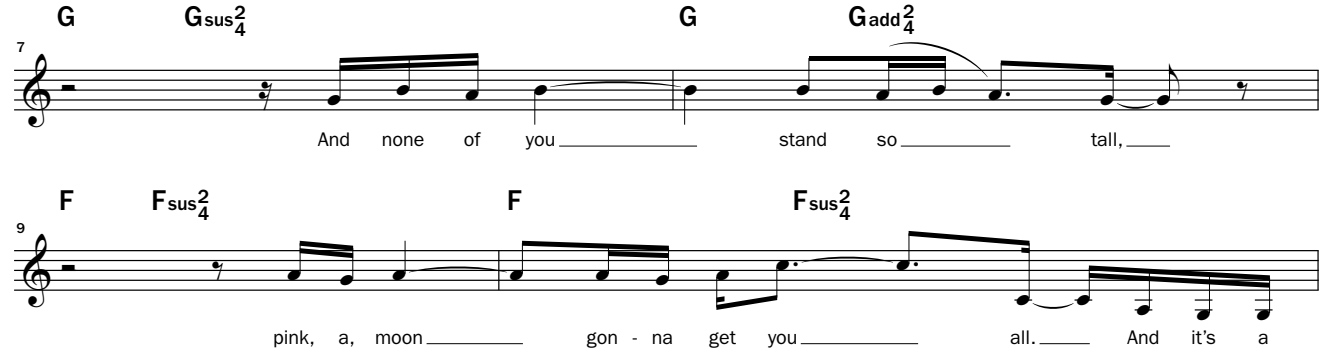
** Music sounds a major second higher than written.*

𝄋 Verse
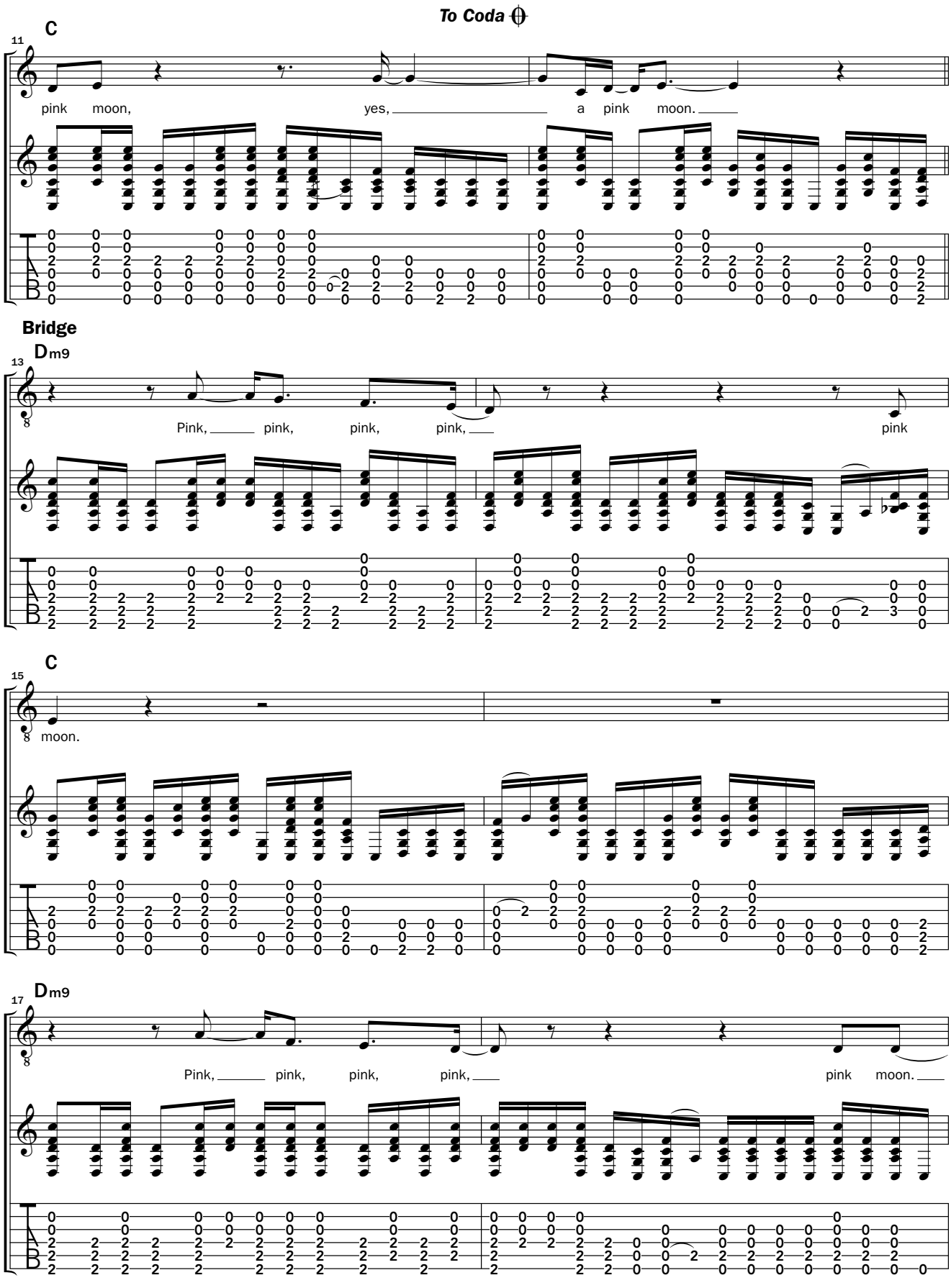




Guitar cont. simile

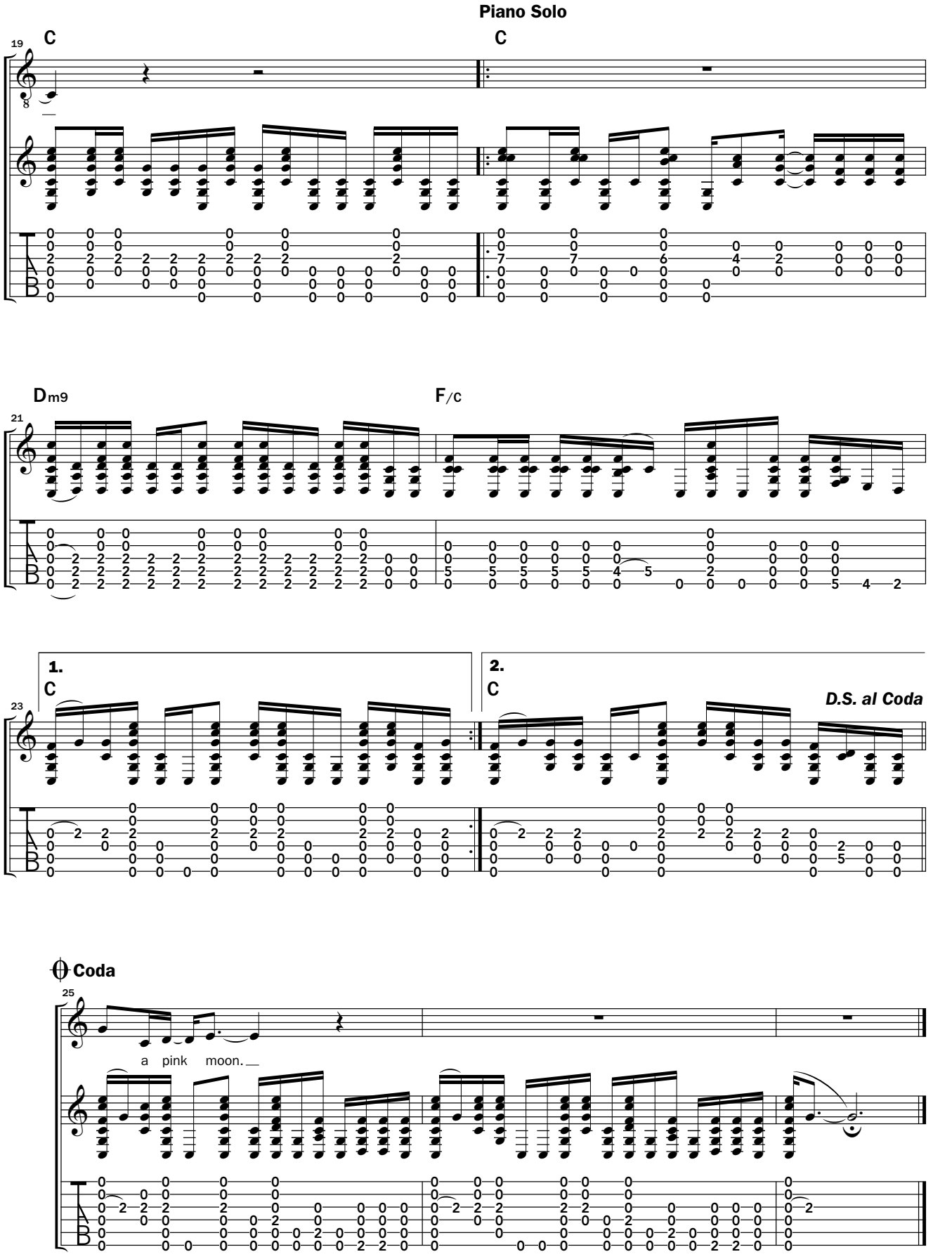


Cont. on p. 62

Copyright (c) 1972 Warlock Music Ltd. Copyright Renewed. All Rights Administered by BMG Rights Management (US) LLC. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission. *Reprinted by permission of Hal Leonard LLC.*

Cont. from p. 61




Piano Solo
19
C
C
Dm9
F/C
21
1.
C
2.
C
D.S. al Coda
23
Coda
25
a pink moon.

WORLD PREMIERE

WATCH BUCK CURRAN PLAY "SONG FOR LIAM"
acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019

Buck Curran



Song for Liam

A father's loving tribute to his son

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

Many guitarists write music with their instruments in hand, letting their fingers suggest new melodies and figures. But for Buck Curran, an American fingerstylist and composer based in Italy, the compositional process usually begins abstractly. "Everything seems to come visually as musical threads or complete melodies in my mind," Curran says. "I hear the music in my head first—usually on walks around town or in nature, or while driving—and then I'm quite anxious to grab my guitar and find out where to best play the notes on the fretboard."

That's how Curran arrived at "Song for Liam," the lead track from his latest album, *Morning Haikus, Afternoon Ragas* (ESP-Disk'/Obsolete Recordings), a meditation on fatherhood and the passage of time. Curran says that "Song for Liam" emerged from memories of his firstborn son, who is now 20. "Liam used to run around the back yard of our house in Maine like a wild young colt. For me, those memories are still so vivid that they often feel like something I'm presently experiencing. So, as I heard the music that became 'Song for Liam,' I imagined the melodies in lilting, galloping rhythms. The bittersweet feeling of remembering those moments is what is most important for setting the mood of the composition."

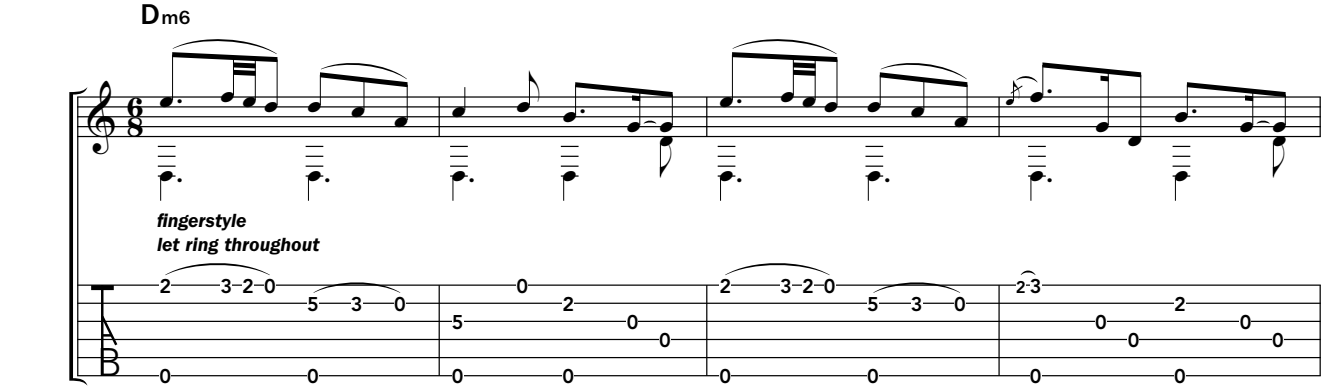
To transfer "Song for Liam" from his mind to the guitar—namely, a Yamaha F310, a modest instrument whose heavy overtone content appeals to him—Curran chose DADGAD tuning, with a capo at the third fret, exploiting the open strings for both melodic and textural effect. Though he didn't compose the piece with a specific set of chord changes in mind, the sum of the melody notes, inner voices, and bass line made for rich, haunting harmonies like B♭maj13 (sounds as Dmaj13 due to the capo) and F6/9 (A♭6/9)—complex chords that in DADGAD tuning require only one or two fretting fingers.

That's not necessarily to say that the piece is easy on the fretting hand—throughout, delicate ornamentations require a bit of finesse and control. If these details seem forbidding, try omitting them at first. Take things slowly and count 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 as per the 6/8 time signature (that's six eighth notes per bar). In bar 1, omit the 32nd note that comes after beat 2, playing just an E (sounds as G) on beat 1 and a D (F) on beat 3. Do the same for each other measure having this rhythm—bars 3, 5, 11, 13, 15, 31, 33, and 35. Once you can confidently play the piece without the embellishments, you'll be ready to add them.

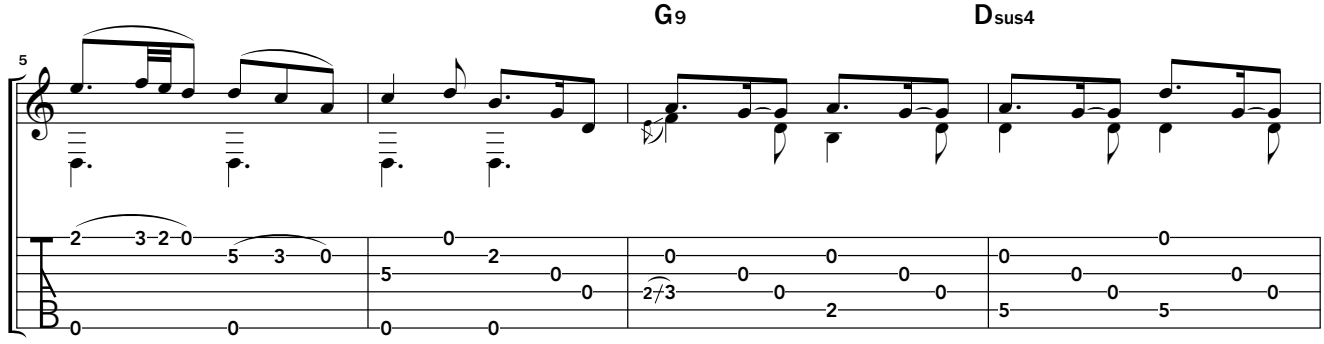
Another aspect of "Song for Liam" that might require some extra attention is the subtle use of bends in bars 42, 44, 46, 49. Play each bend with your third finger, reinforced by your second and first, nudging the second string toward the ceiling, such that its pitch is raised by a half step. Then, after you've bent the note (in all but bar 49), slide down to grab the third-fret note with your first finger, taking care to make sure that the notes sound smoothly connected. AG

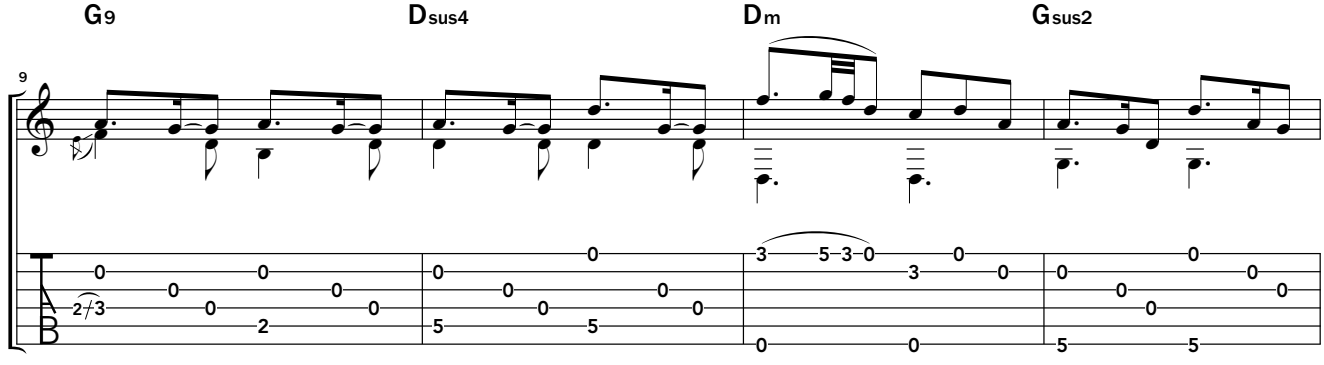
***Tuning: D A D G A D, Capo III**

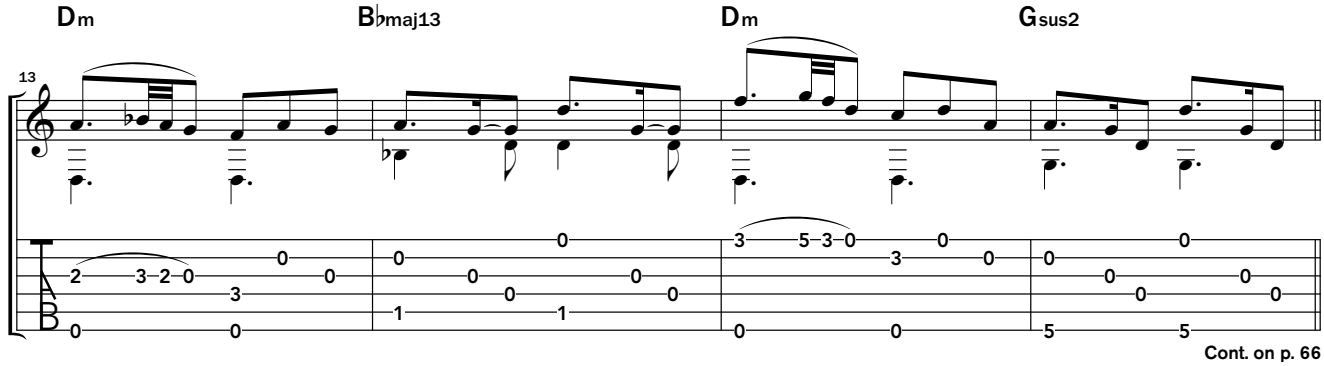
Allegretto



Music sounds a minor third higher than written; capoed fret is 0 in tablature.
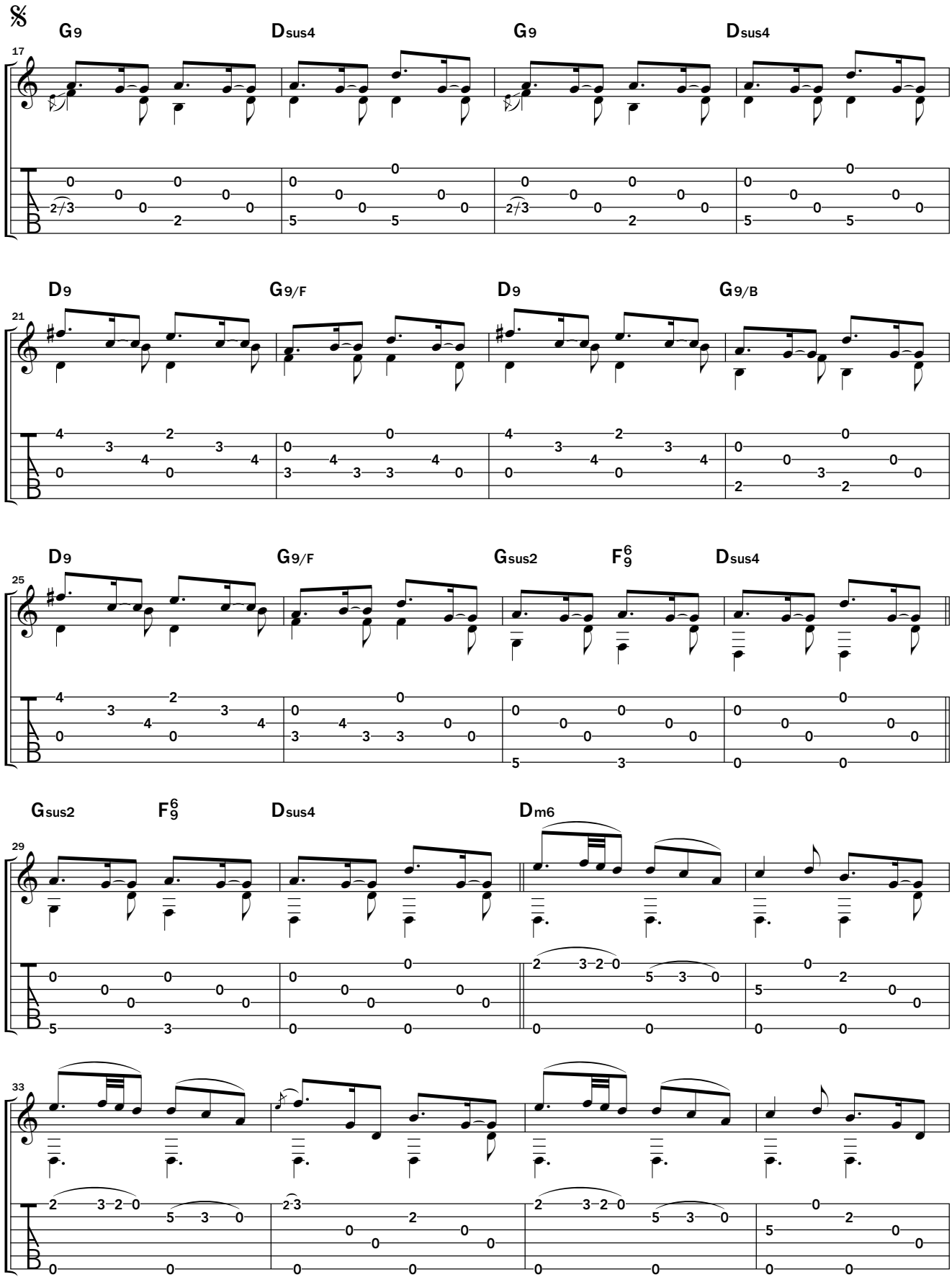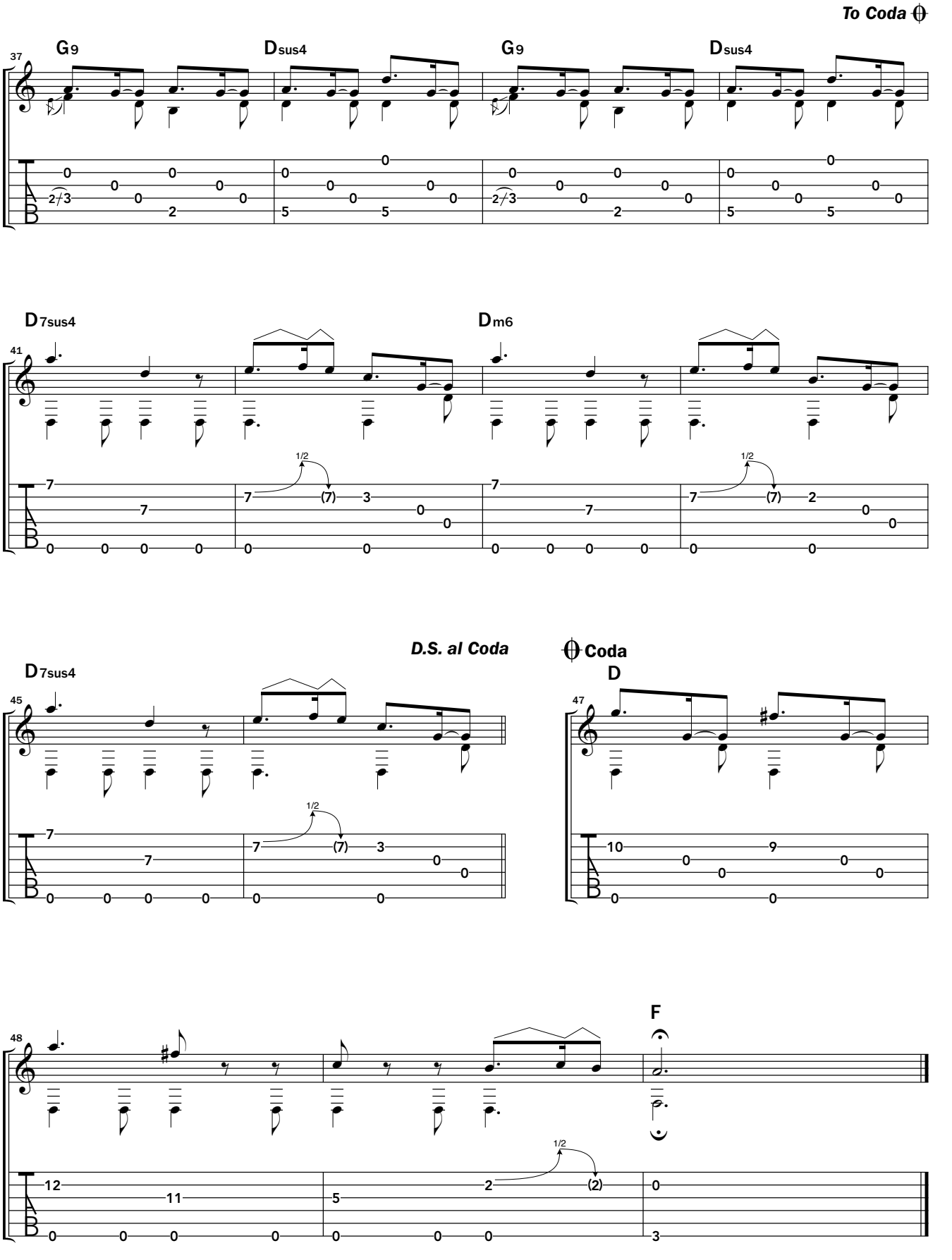






Cont. on p. 66

© 2019 Buck Curran. All rights reserved. Copyright secured. Used by permission.

Cont. from p. 65




To Coda
37
G9
Dsus4
G9
Dsus4
D7sus4
41
Dm6
1/2
D.S. al Coda
D7sus4
45
Coda
D
47
F
48
1/2

WATCH NORMAN BLAKE PLAY "WHISKEY BEFORE BREAKFAST" IN 1986
acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019

Norman Blake Playing a 1928 Martin 00-45



Fiddler's Dram/ Whiskey Before Breakfast

Add this indisputable flatpicking masterpiece to your repertoire

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

The song "Whiskey Before Breakfast," like many fiddle tunes, took a circuitous route to becoming a bluegrass standard. It's thought to have been a Celtic number that made its way to maritime Canada in the late 19th century, where it was picked up by the fiddler and composer Andy de Jarlis, who gave it the name after waking up with a stiff hangover from a drunken session the previous night.

"Whiskey" has become somewhat of a flatpicking standard, one that highly technical players from Norman Blake to Doc Watson with Bryan Sutton to Molly Tuttle have used as a vehicle for virtuosic expression. For that reason, it was a great choice for this first installment of Pickin', which will offer flatpickers something historic or formidable—or both—in each issue.

This transcription is based on the well-known version that Norman Blake, the effortlessly masterful multi-instrumentalist, recorded on guitar on his 1976 album, *Whiskey Before Breakfast*. On the album, Blake pairs the song with another traditional number, "Fiddler's Dram," whose sprightly melody and chord progression behave in a similar manner.

Blake first plays "Fiddler's Dram," with its 16-bar structure. To give you a sense of the subtle variations heard on the repeats, I've notated the form twice (bars 3–18 and 19–34). In contrast, "Whiskey Before Breakfast," which begins in bar 35, has a longer form—a 32-bar AABB structure, in which each section is eight bars long. As with "Fiddler's Dram," two passes through the form are notated here, the first ending in bar 66.

Blake fingers the medley in the key of C major but uses a third-fret capo, causing it to sound in E♭—which he has said aids projection when playing amplified, while making things easier on the fretting hand, due to the shorter distance between the frets.

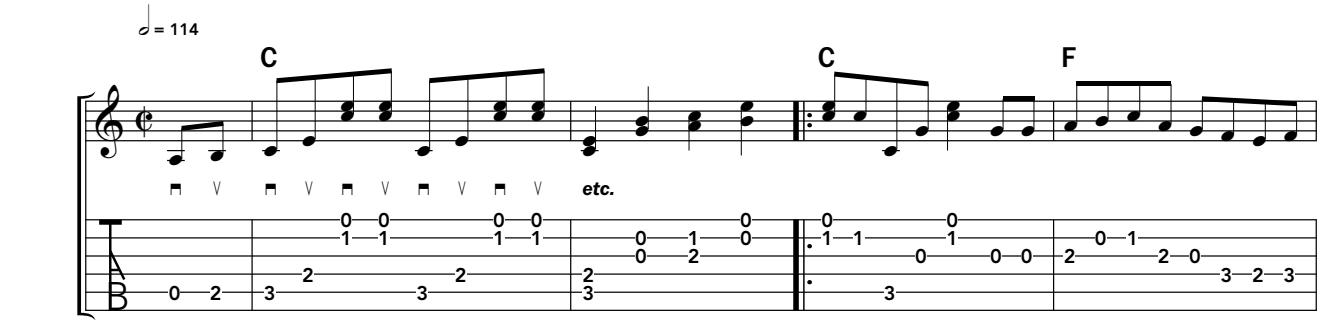
To match Blake's respectable tempo of 114 half notes/228 quarters per minute, it's best to generally use alternate picking, as shown in the pickup bar and the first measure. If you'd like, isolate bar 1—a rhythmic pattern that is essential to the song—and practice it in a loop, slowly at first, inching up the tempo until the pattern feels second nature. For good measure, do the same with a bar containing a single-note texture, like measure 4. The end goal is for constant rhythmic velocity—and a big, confident sound.

Regarding the fretting hand, most of the medley is in the open position—remember to stop the first-, second-, and third-fret notes with your first, second, and third fingers, respectively. "Whiskey Before Breakfast" does stray beyond position in a couple of spots (bars 55 and 63), so be prepared to shift. Also, hold down chord shapes wherever possible. For instance, maintain an open-C grip in bar 3, while going for a combination of single notes and double-stops with your picking hand.

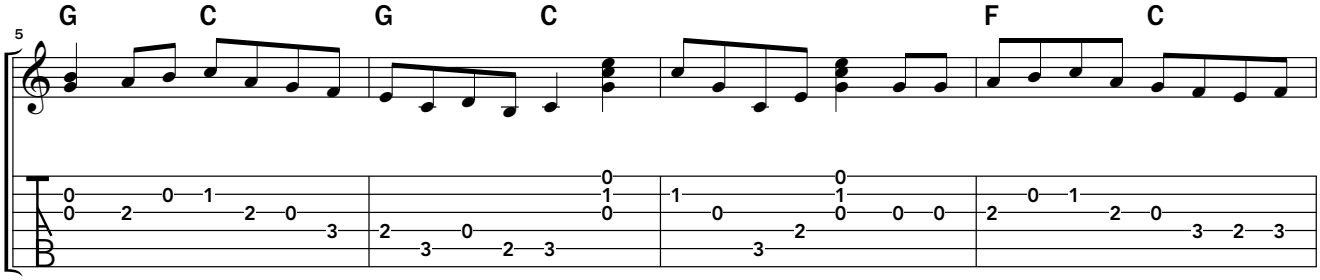
As with learning any traditional or folk tune, don't worry too much about playing exactly what's on the printed page. Instead, go for the lively spirit that Blake and others exude when playing fiddle tune like these—preferably without that morning whiskey. AG

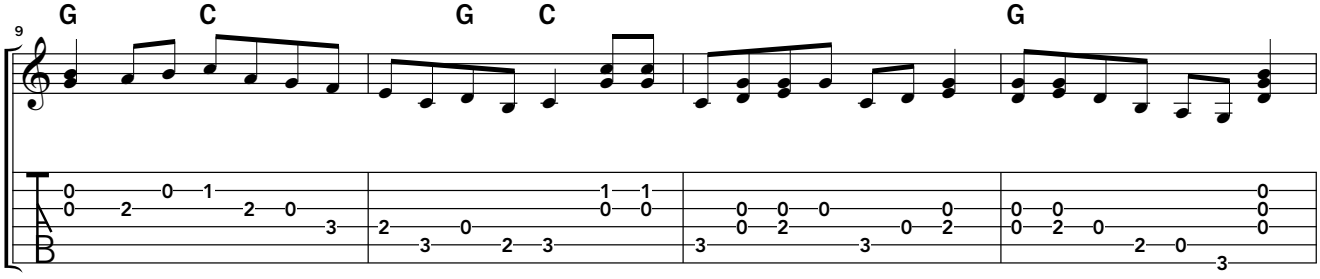
***Capo III**

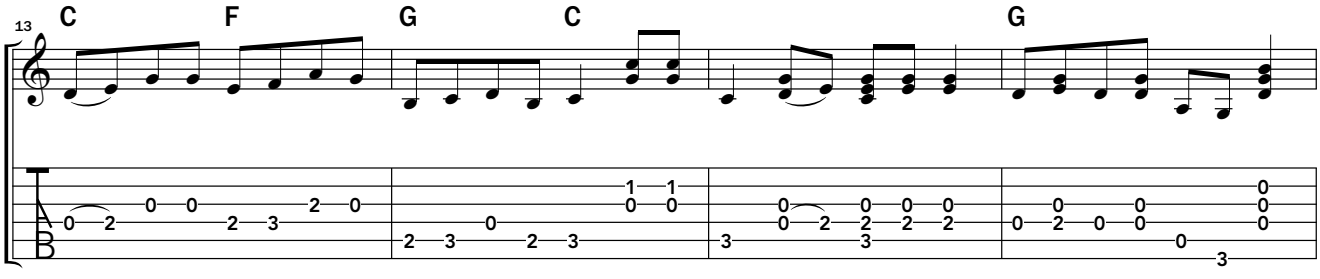
"Fiddler's Dram"

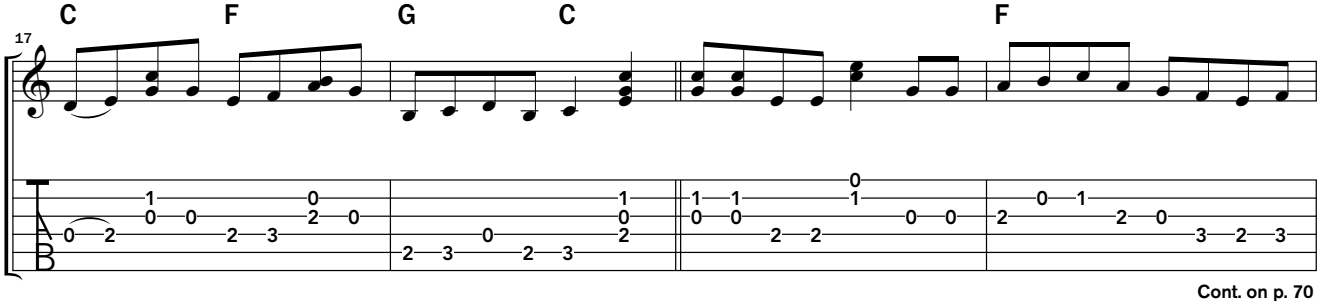


** Music sounds a minor third higher than written.*





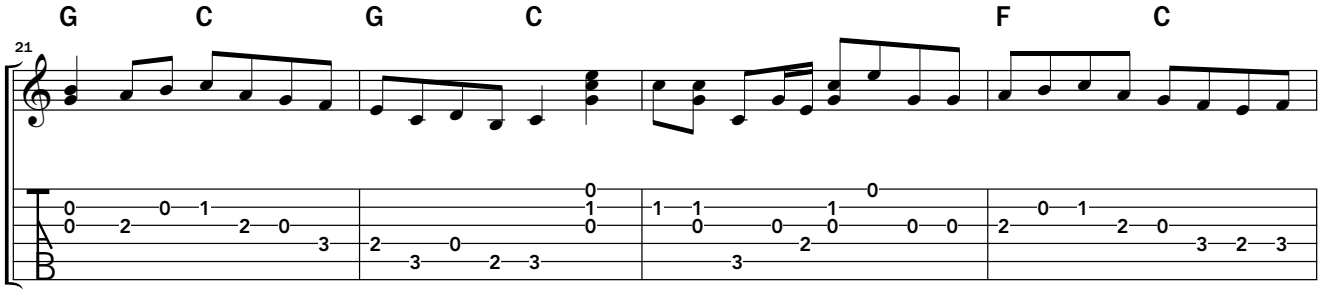


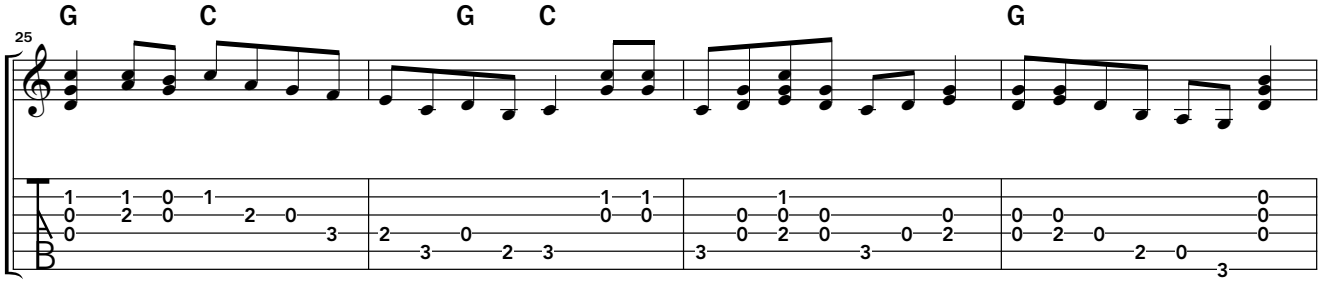


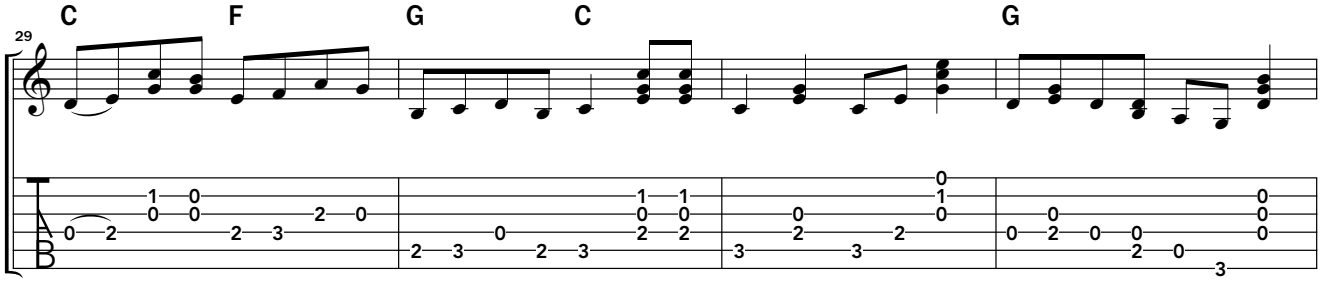
Traditional. This transcription copyright © 2019 String Letter Publishing

Cont. on p. 70

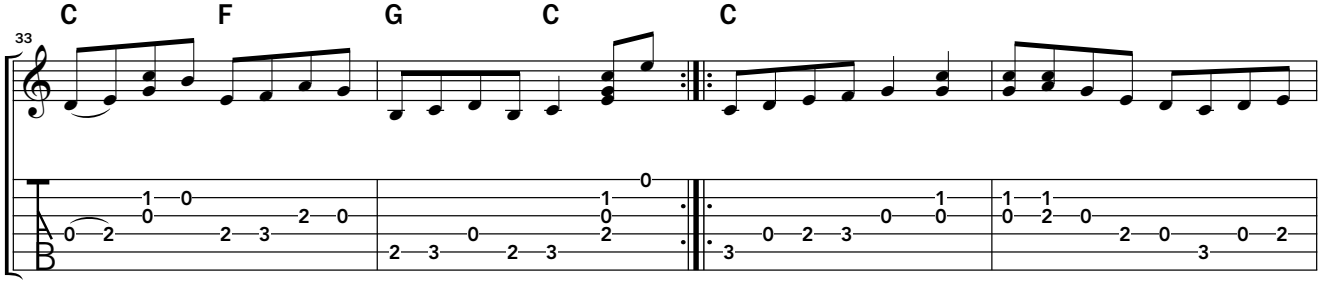
Cont. from p. 69

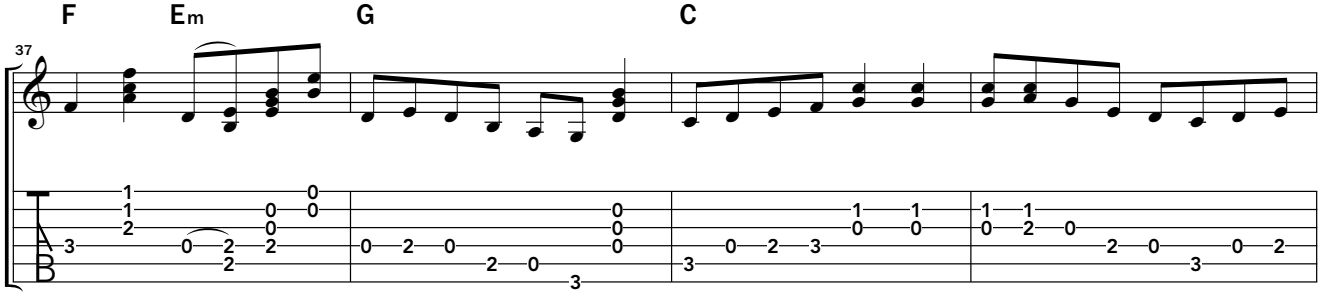


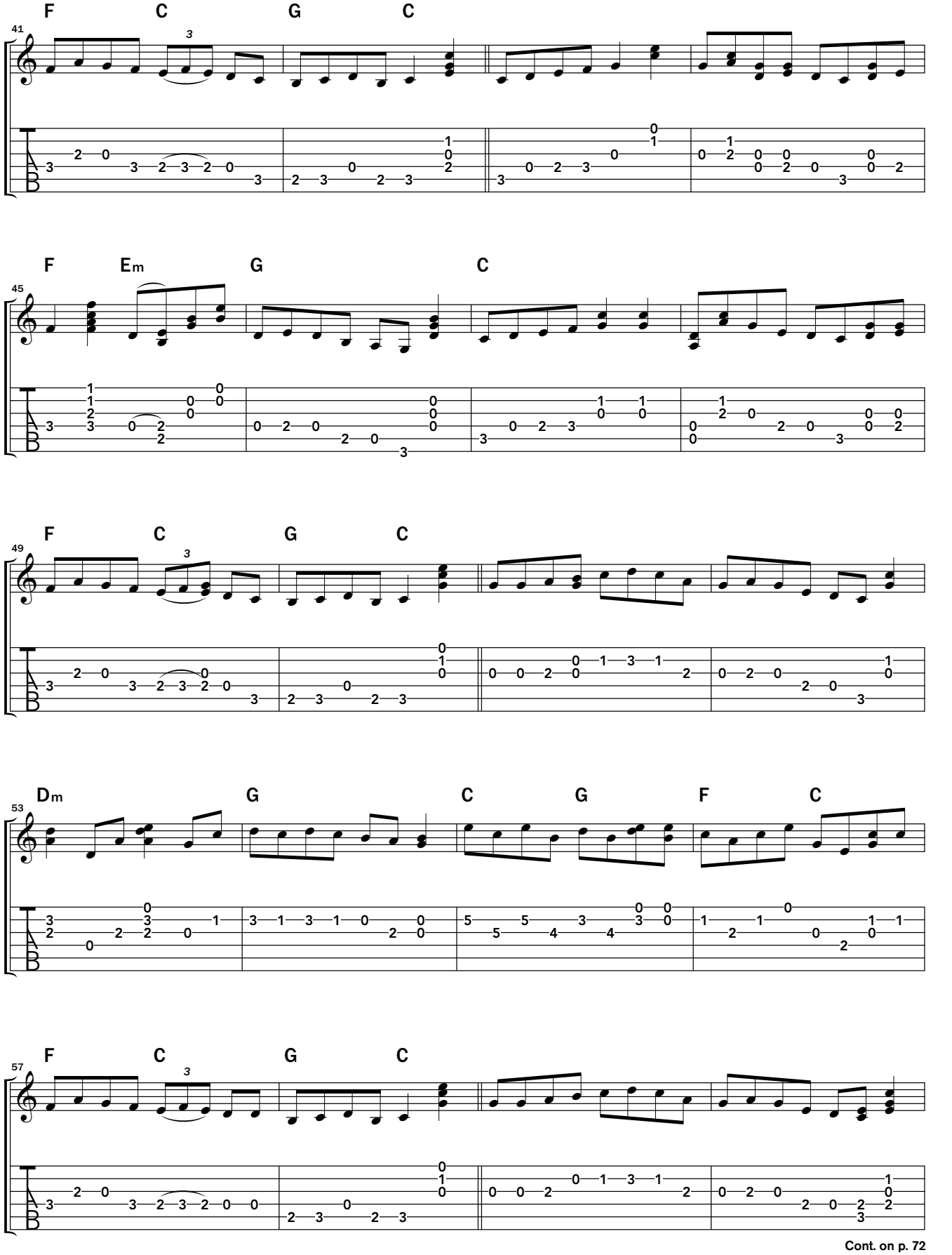




"Whiskey Before Breakfast"
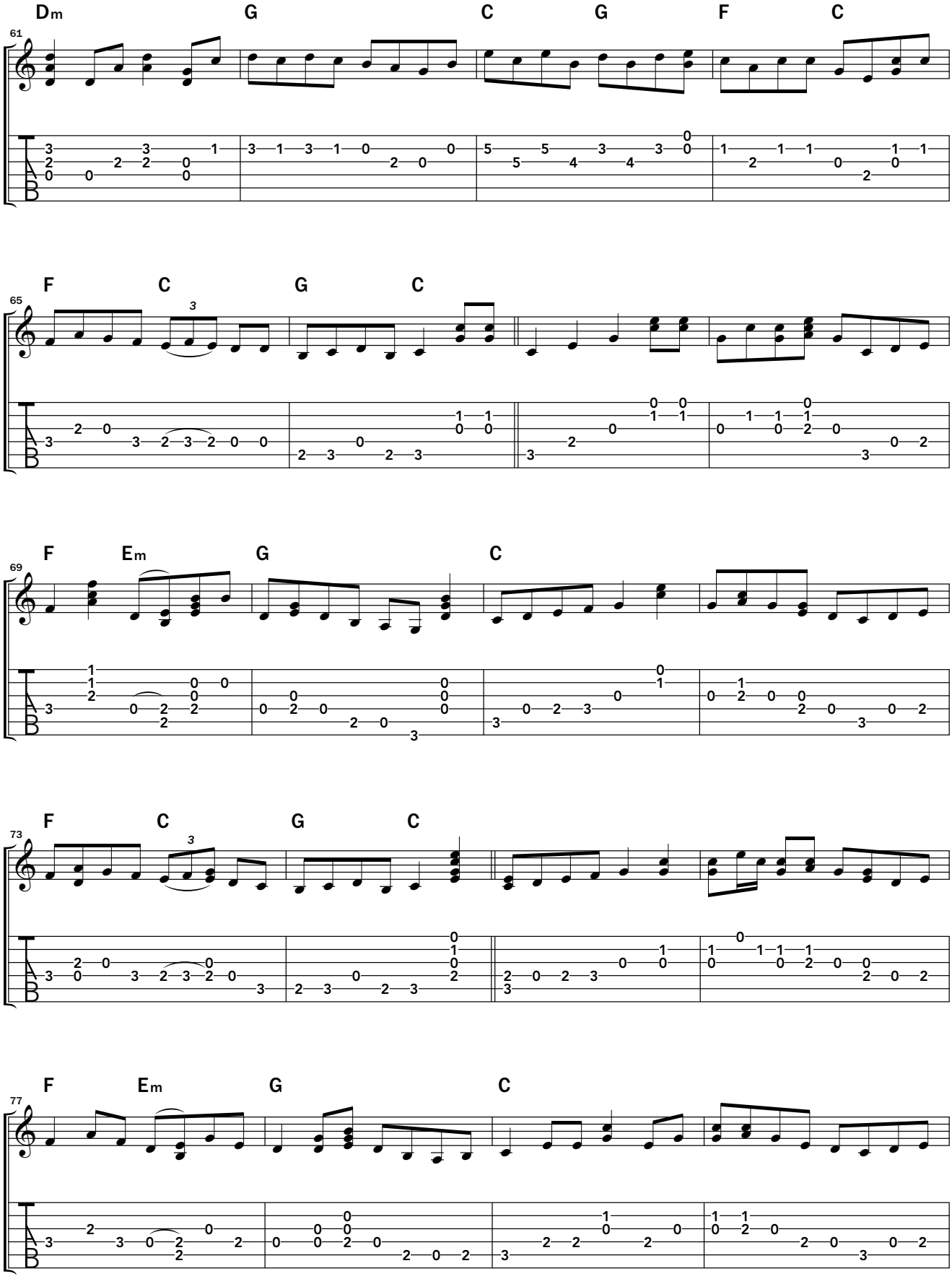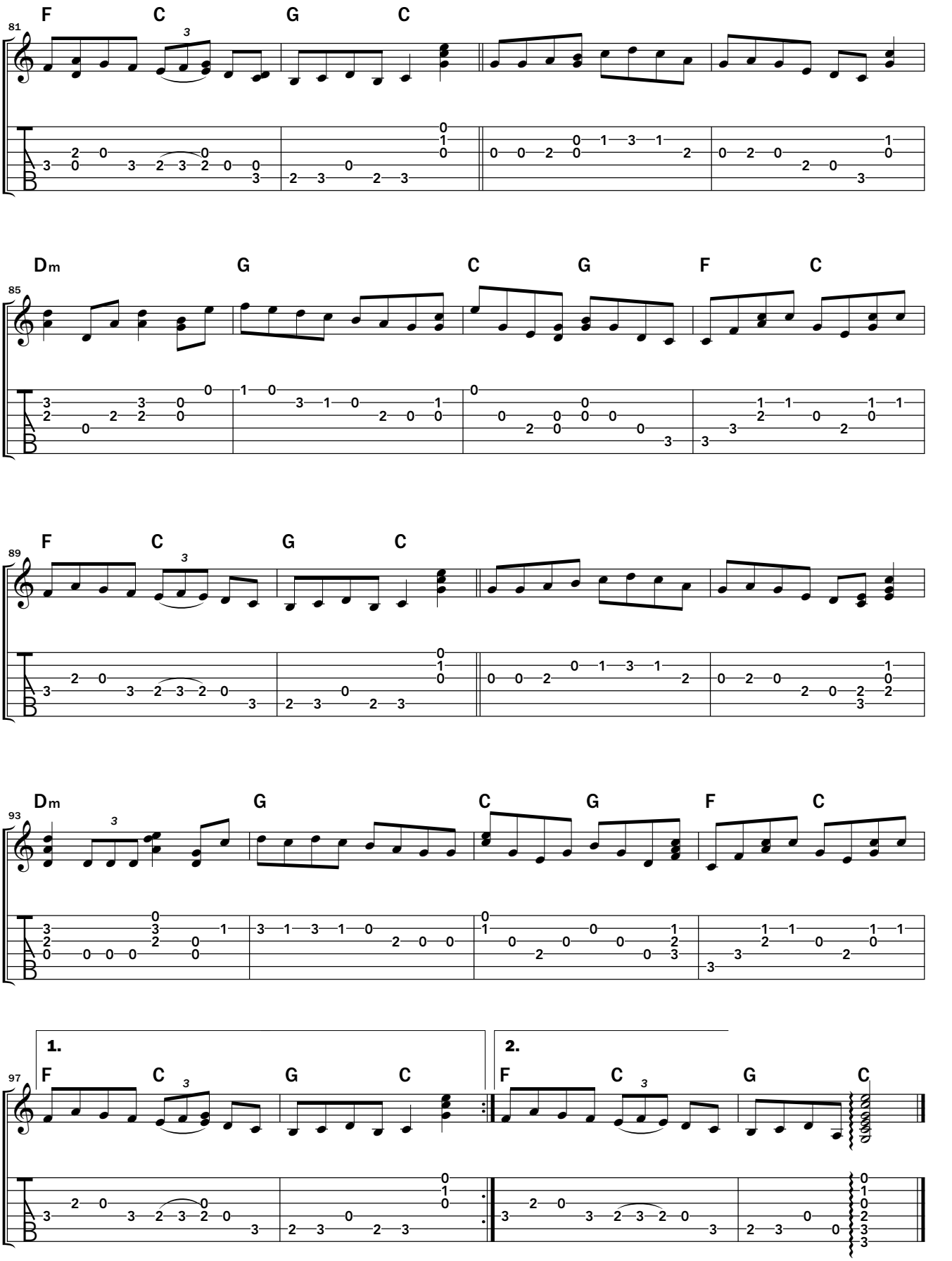






Cont. on p. 72

Cont. from p. 71




81
F C G C
85
Dm G C G F C
89
F C G C
93
Dm G C G F C
97
1.
F C G C
2.
F C G C

WATCH MAURICE TANI PLAY "HOME ON THE RANGE"
acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019

Home on the Range

Strumming a Western classic with five easy chords

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER



Brewster M. Higley

Few songs are as evocative of the ideal of the American West as "Home on the Range," that old ode to frontier life. The original lyrics were penned by Brewster M. Higley, a doctor who moved to Kansas as a homesteader in 1871, and, inspired by his new surroundings, wrote the poem "My Western Home." Higley's friend Daniel E. Kelley later added the music that transformed these words into "Home on the Range" as we know it.

The earliest recording of the tune, sung by a saloonkeeper in 1908, was documented by musicologist and folklorist John Lomax (see feature on page 16), who made his own version two years later. In 1933, the pop vocalist Bing Crosby released what would become the most popular version. (Crosby also rerecorded it in 1938 and 1939.) Singers as varied as Frank Sinatra, Gene Autry, and Tori Amos have made notable interpretations as well.

"Home on the Range" has seen many lyrical variations over the years—Lomax added a verse about the plight of the Native Americans, for instance—and this arrangement captures a typical short set of verses. It's in E major, which works nicely on the guitar. If E is unsuitable to your vocal range, simply use a capo to transpose up to a different key.

In terms of strumming, pretty much any basic pattern in 3/4 time (remember, three quarter notes per measure) should do the trick, but here in the notation I've suggested one that should be fun to play: a root note squarely on beat 1, followed by eighth-note strums on beats 2 and 3. Just think low string on 1 and high strings on 2–3, and go for rhythmic verve over precision. AG

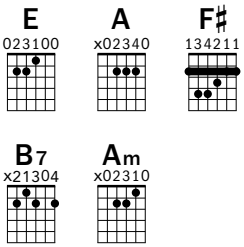




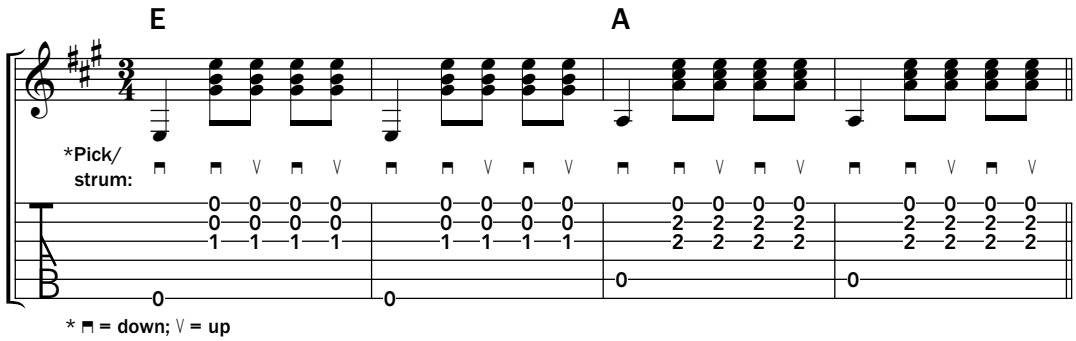
HOME ON THE RANGE

WORDS BY DR. BREWSTER M. HIGLEY, MUSIC BY DANIEL E. KELLEY

Chords



Strumming Pattern



E **A**

1. Oh give me a home where the buffalo roam

E **F♯** **B7**

Where the deer and the antelope play

E **A** **Am**

Where seldom is heard a discouraging word

E **B7** **E**

And the skies are not cloudy all day

Chorus

E **B7** **E**

Home, home on the range

F♯ **B7**

Where the deer and the antelope play

E **A** **Am**

Where seldom is heard a discouraging word

E **B7** **E**

And the skies are not cloudy all day

E **A**

2. Where the air is so pure and the zephyrs so free

E **F♯** **B7**

And the breezes so balmy and light

E **A** **Am**

That I would not exchange my home on the range

E **B7** **E**

For all of the cities so bright

Repeat Chorus

E **A**

3. How often at night when the heavens are bright

E **F♯** **B7**

With the light of the glittering stars

E **A** **Am**

Have I stood there amazed and asked as I gaze

E **B7** **E**

If their glory exceeds that of ours

Repeat Chorus

This arrangement copyright ©2019 by Stringletter Publishing



MAKERS & SHAKERS

Jim D'Addario

Building a legacy of consistency, self-sufficiency, and family

BY JEFFREY PEPPER RODGERS

When Jim D'Addario was a kid on Long Island, there was a house rule for the entire family: No watching television unless you were knotting or coiling strings.

At the time—dateline late 1950s—Jim's father, John D'Addario Sr., was taking the lead from his father in the family instrument-string business, carrying on a lineage of string makers that traced back to the 17th century in Italy. Fast-forward to the present, and Jim D'Addario is in his 46th year working for D'Addario and Company, currently serving as CEO. (Note that although alternate pronunciations abound in the music world, the correct way to say the name is "Da-dairy-oh"—don't add a syllable for the apostrophe.) Still based in New York state, D'Addario now manufactures a wide range of products that are distributed around the world, not just for stringed instruments but for drums, woodwinds, and more.

Though he'd been a student of music, not engineering, Jim D'Addario always had a keen interest in electronics and how things are made. His command of the technical details of manufacturing was evident in a presentation he gave last fall at the Woodstock Invitational Luthiers Showcase on the evolution of D'Addario strings, and in a follow-up phone interview with me from the company headquarters in Farmingdale, New York. Since the early '70s, when the recently formed J. D'Addario and Company began producing strings under the D'Addario name, the company has continually developed new machines and methods for making strings. The goal, said Jim D'Addario, is to better control variables in the process.

"To me the most important thing a manufacturer does is figure out how to deliver a high level of consistency in the product," he said, "so that people are not disappointed that it doesn't perform the same as it did when they purchased it previously." As an example, he cited what he feels may be the most important factor in the sound and performance of strings: the tension of the wrap wire. Around 1988, D'Addario worked with engineer/musician Norman Pickering on developing a closed-loop system for controlling the tension applied to the wrap wire during winding; if the tension varied, the system self-corrected.

"Ultimately that evolved into the even better digital systems that we have today, where once we put the recipe for an .053 phosphor bronze string into our database, it loads into all our machines," said D'Addario. "This constant dedication to removing the chance of something being off even just a little bit in the end makes for a great product."

In the realm of music, what ultimately matters is the experience of the player, so manufacturing specifications always have to be matched up with the results of subjective real-world testing. In the late '80s, for instance, the

company set the specs for various tensions of classical guitar treble strings for its Pro-Arté line with the help of Julian Bream, John Williams, and other top classical players. "We didn't tell anybody what they were playing," said D'Addario. "We just varied the diameters by tens of thousandths of inches, through exhaustive amounts of sampling, until we had a consensus with people who said, 'You know what, *that* is what I'd call a normal tension.'"

D'Addario works with tolerances that are extremely tight. For a normal-tension Pro-Arté high E string, for instance, the diameter averages .0280 inches—and is kept between .0278 and .0283. Initially, D'Addario was buying nylon from a supplier and had to use laser sorting to identify the strings that were within the target range; ultimately, the company built extrusion machines that hit the spec precisely, and now produces all its own monofilament nylon in house.

The same philosophy of controlling variables extends to the raw materials used in strings. Increasingly, D'Addario makes its own materials rather than sourcing them from outside. The result is greater efficiency and consistency, plus, D'Addario said, "We get the advantage of being able to experiment with different specifications, whether we're just going to change the temper slightly or use a slightly different alloy."

In 2013, the company made a major investment in making its own high-carbon steel wire, used as the core wire in wound strings and as plain steel strings. (Fun fact: the same type of steel is used in springs, steel-belted radial tires, and high-end sushi knives.) Since then, D'Addario has added the capacity to make its own phosphor bronze and nickel-plated wrap wires.

Producing all these materials internally impacts not only how the company makes strings, but where it can make them, said D'Addario. "The constant redesigning of all of the machines that we build to make the strings, and the fact that we're efficiently producing our raw materials at a lower cost than when we had to source them from vendors, has made it possible for us to keep manufacturing music strings—700,000 a day—here in New York, in one of the most expensive counties in the country for manufacturing."

Over the years, D'Addario has made a point of educating players about some of the technologies behind its strings, and why they matter. An ad from the late '70s, for instance, asked, "What does micro-electronics have to do with making great strings?" and went on to explain in some detail about the company's new microprocessor-controlled wire-wrap system.

Today, Jim D'Addario still feels there are myths and misconceptions among players about the technical aspects of strings that he'd like to counter. One is the view that round wire makes a better string than the hexagon-shaped core wire that D'Addario uses. "Blind tests have proven that musicians have significant difficulty distinguishing which string is the round core and which string is the hexagon core," he said. "The insurance policy of using a hex core is having those sharp edges of the core wire biting into the wrap wire: that just makes for a much longer-lasting, more consistent music string."

The other viewpoint he cited is that hand-winding of strings is superior to machine winding. "The fact of the matter is, we've built so many controls into our machinery that there's no way a human being could manually feed the wire at the level of quality that we do in our automated equipment," he said. "It's a tough, tiring job, and by the end of the day they're not going to be pulling as hard as they were at 8:00 in the morning."

One thing he finds has remained consistent over the decades is what players are looking for in strings, regardless of how much instruments or music styles change. "In my career I have seen the needle move left and right a few times with regards to the frequency range of the tonality of the string—how much brightness, how much high end is there," he said. "We sell quite a few nickel bronze strings for acoustic, which are not as bright as an 80/20 set *or* phosphor bronze. It's a little bit of a trend. So I think tastes evolve, but they're never really uniquely new. It's just they keep going around on a carousel."

Jim and his brother, John D'Addario Jr., current president of the D'Addario Foundation, are the third generation of the family in the U.S. who've led D'Addario and Company. A number of other family members work there today—more than a dozen in all—including John D'Addario III, who now serves as president. With its global scope, obviously D'Addario has grown way beyond its roots as a small family business. But the family connection is still central to the company's identity and future.

"It would be very satisfying for my brother and me to see the fourth and fifth generations successfully transition in and take over management of the company, and we work really hard at trying to make that happen," said D'Addario. "We have a family constitution, by-laws, and a family council, and we have rules that we follow to respect each other and have an open dialogue. We meet for a three-day retreat in the summer, and we educate all the kids on the fiduciary and social aspects of managing such an important company. Twelve hundred families rely on us for their livelihood right now, and that's not something we take lightly.

"So we would be thrilled if we could say that, 50 years from now, it's still a family business, and the sixth or seventh generations are running it. That might not happen—family businesses do fail. But we're hopeful we're doing the educational part to make certain that D'Addario and Company remains a family business." AG

BEING GREEN

Back in the early '90s, D'Addario took the step of dramatically reducing the amount of packaging with its strings, eliminating the paper envelopes for individual strings in its guitar sets and color-coding the ball ends to identify which string is which. A few decades later, the numbers really add up: the change has saved 1.6 billion envelopes. Not all guitarists are happy with getting the strings all in one packet, Jim D'Addario acknowledged; some still prefer individual envelopes and don't buy the company's strings as a result. Even so, he said, "We're proud of the milestones, so we'd rather sacrifice a few of our customers and have a clear conscience that we're not having as negative an effect on the environment as we could have if we were still using those envelopes."

In 2016, the company launched the PlayBack string recycling program, which at this writing is approaching the mark of 2.5 million strings recycled. That's just scratching the surface of what could be done, D'Addario said—currently the program is only in the U.S., and he'd like to see it go industry wide.

"At this point, we're reaching out to several of our competitors to get them involved," he said. "If there's a way that we can turn those strings back into useful materials for manufacturing other products, that would be great. The company we're working with, TerraCycle, claims that when we get to a certain critical mass, they could probably develop a metal alloy that's a conglomeration of all the materials that are being recycled, and perhaps make a wrap wire alloy so that we can make a string that works successfully with a completely recycled alloy. That to me would be the ultimate dream. That might take another five years to do. We'd love to see that happen. We need more people involved to make that happen."

Denser bridge pin materials such as ebony and bone can subtly improve your tone.



Bridge Pins: Can They Change Your Guitar's Sound?

Here's a small way to tweak your axe

BY MAMIE MINCH

Q: *I'm looking for some advice about upgrading original plastic bridge pins to wood or bone. I've done this on most of my guitars, but I find it hard to notice if the sound has changed. Of course, I'm not an expert, and I also changed my strings at the same time. I guess I'm feeling a bit skeptical, because it seems like plenty of well-made factory instruments come with plastic bridge pins. If it is such an improvement on sound, why wouldn't nicer instruments come with this upgrade?*

—Michel Bibeau, Québec, Canada

A: Thank you for this great and multi-angled question. You are curious about what practical changes might be made to the sound of your guitar by changing the material of your bridge pins, and it sounds like you are also wondering about the hype that is associated with this particular question. Lots of guitar owners love to tweak and customize their favorite toys—and of course, the paths you can go down are myriad. When I first heard about fossilized wooly mammoth ivory being used as a bridge-pin material, I'm pretty sure I rolled my eyes so hard the sloshing sound was heard across the room.

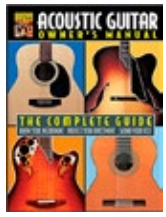
Of course, there's more to this topic than I initially gave it credit for. When we talk about aftermarket upgrades people can do to their guitars to improve the sound, I think the most effective one is swapping a plastic or Micarta saddle for a bone saddle. The hardness and density of the material transfers vibration way better than soft plastic, and the saddle's job is so vital to the sound of your guitar that



Mamie Minch

GOT A QUESTION?

Uncertain about guitar care and maintenance? The ins-and-outs of guitar building? Or a topic related to your gear? Ask *Acoustic Guitar*'s resident repair expert Mamie Minch. Send an email titled "Repair Expert" to Senior Editor Greg Olwell at greg.olwell@stringletter.com, and he'll forward it to Mamie.



If *AG* selects your question for publication, you'll receive a complimentary copy of *AG*'s *The Acoustic Guitar Owner's Manual.*

the results are usually pretty easy to hear. A second most important material upgrade would be to exchange a plastic nut for bone. The swap you asked about, using a different material for the bridge pins, would be more subtle yet.

Here's why: bridge pins don't really hold the strings to the bridge, and they don't come into contact with the sounding length of the string like the saddle or nut. What they do is hold the ball end snug up against the bridge plate—and plug up the hole needed to fish that ball end into the bridge. I bet lots of our readers have experienced a bridge pin launching itself out of its hole when tuning a string up. This happens when a ball end that is not flush against the bridge plate slips and the tension yanks the pin up and out. It likely means your plastic pin is distorted and worn. So first, you'll want a pin that fits the guitar and holds the ball end right up against the plate. Your repair person will have a reamer with the right angle to make a replacement set of pins fit your guitar.

The second job of bridge pins is where things get interesting—they fill holes in your bridge. You can imagine that if a material with a different density or weight was used, your guitar may sound a bit different. Adding mass to your bridge could affect all kinds of things: the way the top vibrates, subtle changes in tone and color, and sustain. Different materials available for the job include higher-quality plastic, ivoroid, bone, ebony or rosewood, Tusq, brass, buffalo horn, walrus jawbone, and ivory from a walrus or a wooly mammoth. Practically speaking, there are so many variables between instruments that we can't make any sort of sweeping statement about one being better than another. I can say that I have some clients with quite sensitive ears who really feel that their investment in mammoth pins has improved their guitar's tone a lot.

Adding mass to your bridge could affect all kinds of things: the way the top vibrates, subtle changes in tone and color, and sustain.

My feeling is that while there is some hype around this question, there is also something to it. One simple advantage to harder pin material is that it won't warp and bend around the string's ball end. On a recent afternoon in my shop, my ears heard a difference between cheap plastic, ebony, bone, and brass pins; ebony and bone were an improvement, and pretty similar-sounding, while the brass pins added a brightness that was hard to deny, but not necessarily what everyone would want. I think it's a neat thing and pretty inexpensive (if you steer clear of mammoth, a set of which can cost $100 or more) to experiment with.

As for why typical factory-made guitars don't come with denser bridge-pin materials, consider that they don't even always come with bone saddles! If they did, you would be robbed of the fun of going on the internet and hashing it out with players around the world.

Mamie Minch is the co-owner of Brooklyn Lutherie and an active blues performer. brooklynlutherie.com





Aug 25 - 31, 2019
Wasilla, AK

co-sponsored by: 90.3fm KNBA
A KDHNIC BROADCAST STATION

LEARN BLUES
FLATPICKING
FINGERSTYLE
SONGWRITING
VOICE, MANDOLIN
UKULELE, BANJO....
and so much more!

Laurence Juber | Beppe Gambetta
Dave Nachmanoff
Jon Shain | Radim Zenkl
Victoria Vox | Steve Baughman
Cyd Smith | Rob Goldberg

INCLUDES: Classes, Accommodations, Meals, Airport Shuttle and more.

Visit our website:
www.acousticalaska.com
907.331.4864



ANYTIME. ANYWHERE.

The ToneWoodAmp allows you to create a variety of rich, "wet" effects on your acoustic guitar—UNPLUGGED, with the effects emanating organically from the guitar's sound hole.

PLUS, the ToneWoodAmp can be easily installed on virtually any acoustic guitar, NO AMP REQUIRED!

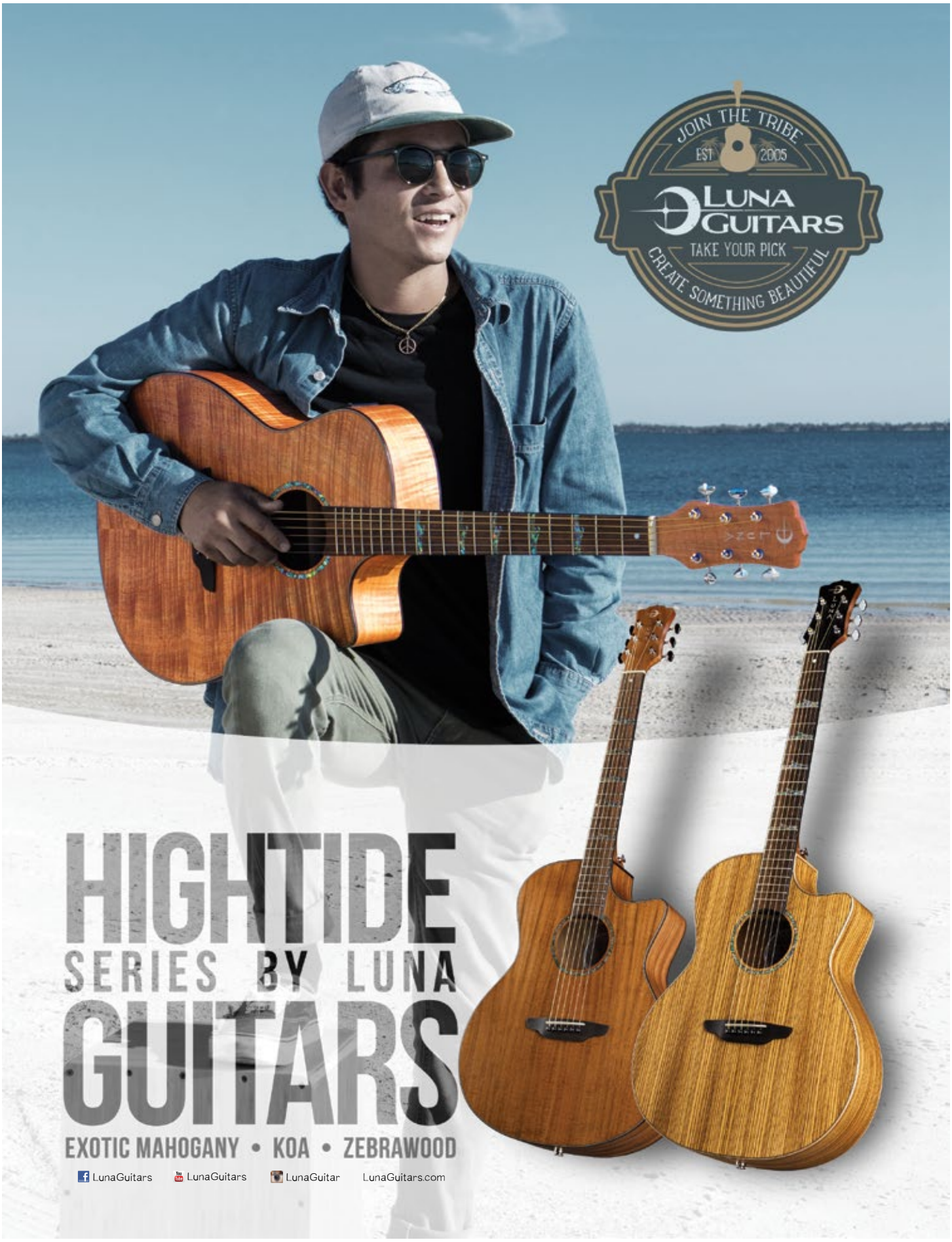
TO LEARN MORE AND CLAIM YOUR MAGAZINE DISCOUNT, VISIT US AT:
TONEWOODAMP.COM/AGMAG



"REVOLUTIONARY PRODUCT." "COOLEST ACOUSTIC GUITAR GIZMO." "CUTTING-EDGE PRODUCT." "OPENS UP A WORLD OF UNPLUGGED SOUNDS."

GUITAR WORLD PLATINUM AWARD EXCELLENCE · EDITORS' GuitarPlayer PICK · ACOUSTIC GUITAR · American songwriter the craft + music

TONEWOODAMP
WWW.TONEWOODAMP.COM


JOIN THE TRIBE
EST 2005
LUNA GUITARS
TAKE YOUR PICK
CREATE SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL
HIGHTIDE
SERIES BY LUNA
GUITARS
EXOTIC MAHOGANY • KOA • ZEBRAWOOD
LunaGuitars
LunaGuitars
LunaGuitar
LunaGuitars.com

Dogal®
SINCE 1950
HANDMADE STRINGS

Richer content alloys
providing lower tension,
longer life and superior output

STRINGS BY MAIL

USA Distributor for Dogal Strings | Venice, Italy
stringsbymail.com 800-513-8271

Ashokan MUSIC & DANCE CAMPS
ACOUSTIC GUITAR CAMP
Monday–Friday July 22–26, 2019


PHOTO: STEWART DEAN

PRACTICAL MUSIC THEORY, JAM SESSIONS, SONG SWAPS

Specialize or sample from SWING / BLUES / CELTIC
JAZZ / POP / COUNTRY / FOLK / AMERICANA

JEFFERSON HAMER DAVID SURETTE MARY FLOWER
HAPPY TRAUM SYLVIA HEROLD MIKE DOWLING
LARRY BAIONE JEFFREY PEPPER RODGERS PETER DAVIS

REGISTER AT ASHOKAN.ORG
Immerse yourself in the natural beauty of New York's Catskills.
Ashokan Music & Dance Camps - Olivebridge, NY (845) 246-2121

The 2019
ARTISAN
GUITAR SHOW

Handcrafted Guitar Showcase • Concerts • Master Classes

APRIL 12-14, 2019
Best Western Premier
The Central Hotel & Conference Center
800 E. Park Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17111

SPONSORS
Bourgeois Guitars
Jack Daniel's
Acoustic Guitar
DHR Guitar Experience
Heritage

ARTISANGUITARSHOW.COM



www.originalguitarchair.com
479-876-4520
proudly made in the USA

THE ORIGINAL
GUITAR CHAIR

Elliott
CAPOS
Handcrafting the World's Finest Capos

A beautifully hand-crafted work of art, designed to keep your fine instrument and music sounding just as it should. With multiple models to choose from, there's an Elliott Capo for everyone!
Wrap Us Around Your Neck
ElliottCapo.com

BOX TECH

Acoustic Guitar Tech Kit
groovetechtools.com
GROOVETECH

Phoenix Guitar Company
Only the finest woods and craftsmanship

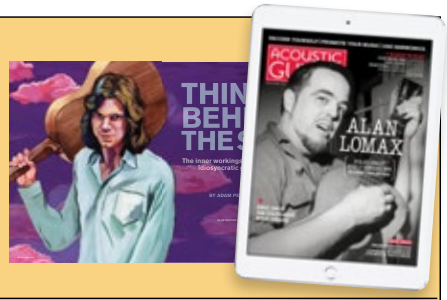
Pictured:
The Nylon String OM
480-239-4055
PhoenixGuitarCo.com

Performers Sought
For the San Francisco Bay Area!
Bread & Roses®
Hope and Healing Through Live Music™
Volunteer your musical talent to bring hope, healing and joy to our neighbors most in need.
Bread & Roses has been bringing live music to hospitals, convalescent homes, rehabilitation facilities, jails and more since 1974. We are always looking for enthusiastic performers to join us!

www.BreadAndRoses.org
415-945-7120

ACOUSTIC GUITAR
GET 10% OFF IN THE STORE
USE THE CODE
AGSP10
AT CHECKOUT!
STORE.ACOUSTICGUITAR.COM

Introducing Finger-Tone® Fingerstyle Guitar Picks by ProPik®
Now you can get the same pure sound of fingernails and fingertips from a light weight metal finger pick
• No fingernails to fuss with
• Fingertips touch string as you play
• Large and medium sizes available
AVAILABLE AT YOUR FAVORITE MUSIC STORE OR CONTACT:
GUPTILL MUSIC
(714) 556-8013
www.guptillmusic.com


DOWNLOAD THE DIGITAL EDITION OF THIS ISSUE FOR FREE


VISIT
store.AcousticGuitar.com
select this issue, then enter the code
MA315FR
when you check out to get the digital edition for free!

Taylor Grand Pacific 717 and 517e Builder's Editions

The first guitars built around the company's innovative bracing may be "the most un-Taylor-y" Taylors yet

BY JAMES ROTONDI



The name Taylor has always evoked a particular sound—articulation and clarity in the top end; plenty of supportive low-end information, top-notch tuning, intonation, and projection; and a bright harmonic richness in the overtones—that's ideal for thick, overdubbed acoustic rhythms in the studio and detailed, open-sounding solo accompaniment for new country troubadours and acoustic pop writers alike. Few guitars strum better or fuller. It's a modern sound, lively and highly resonant. Dark, rounded, and vintage-inspired, we conclude, Taylor is not.

With its wide waist and round-shoulder dreadnought body shape, the decidedly vintage-inspired Grand Pacific—Taylor's newest, and perhaps most adventurous guitar yet—seeks to upend those notions, or as the company's master builder Andy Powers puts it, to be "the most un-Taylor-y Taylor we've ever built." What's more, as the first new production Taylor built from the ground up around Powers' innovative V-Class bracing architecture, the Grand Pacific represents a new chapter in acoustic guitar design at the California giant's El Cajon, California, headquarters, a shot-across-the-bow for what the company tells us is a likely migration toward V-Class bracing in all Taylor acoustic guitars for the foreseeable future.

"I absolutely love the classic Taylor sound, articulate and vibrant," says Powers [see our cover story on V-Class in the May 2018 issue of *AG*], "but I love a lot of other sounds, too."

Namechecking American roots artists from Bill Monroe to Gram Parsons to Gillian Welch, Powers explains that with the Grand Pacific, his goal is to bring attributes Taylor is known for—and that V-Class seeks to improve on—with a



517e

sound and aesthetic that, rather than leaning toward the modern, recalls "those great American records of the past." One could argue that, in what may well be a new golden age of roots-fueled American music, that's an entirely sane new path for the Taylor sound.

A GRAND ENTRANCE

Pulling our two Grand Pacifics—a mahogany 517e and a rosewood 717—out of their tooled-leather-style cases, I'm struck by the comfortable, almost aged feel and texture of these instruments. They're a combination of several elements, including their Silent Satin–finished tops, the deliciously smooth chamfered body edges, subtly rolled fretboard edges, sapele body binding, and a new contoured "curve wing" bridge shape.

Likewise, the new top finishes, including a unique low-gloss Wild Honey Burst top on the 517e (which brings to mind a tobacco sunburst Les Paul or a slightly lighter-colored Gibson J-45) are very easy on the eyes. In both cases, the grain of the wood really delights the eye.

MAHOGANY RUSH

Our mahogany 517e produced an extremely focused, rounded, and balanced tone throughout the fretboard when played with a pick. At first a bit dark to my ears, the 517e responded exceptionally well to being whacked quite hard, even emitting a sweet, grainy growl, with gutsy midrange, on hard-struck chords between the fifth and tenth frets. Elsewhere, single flatpicked notes bloomed beautifully, even when played quickly, with excellent volume and sustain, if perhaps a little dampened-sounding.

I personally found the tension and string gauge on our model to be a bit heavy, with modest bending virtually out of the question—though for fingerpicking, that higher tension made for a very noticeable evenness to both high and low strings, really allowing ringing strings to speak as loud as fretted ones and producing bell-like tones even when not struck with total force. With the kind of loud, bold, and controlled mid-range tones and tucked-in bass that microphones often love, the 517 is clearly an excellent recording guitar. That said, this is not where you'll go looking to point a small diaphragm condenser mic around the 19th fret; if zing is your thing, the 517e Grand Pacific may not be your board. If the big, rounded tonalities and loud projection of a J-45 are your jam, however, definitely consider riding the waves with this one.

NATURAL BORN

As you might expect for a guitar with Indian rosewood back and sides, our natural finish 717 had a bit more top-end airiness and sweeter, more



The 717 and 517e both feature Sitka spruce tops and sapele binding.

pronounced overtones. It's a good middle ground between a traditional Taylor and the darker, more Gibson-sounding 517. It's here, too, on the 717, that Taylor's suggestion that notes on the Grand Pacific "overlap" more than on, say, a Grand Auditorium, seems especially correct. Notes are broad and full, sure, but they also layer in an almost creamy way compared to the articulate, grainy crispness of, say, a 714 or a 314.

What's more, even with similarly heavy strings, the 717 seemed to play a bit more effortlessly, and the lack of a cutaway presented no special impediment to single-note lines and double-stops in the upper registers, at least up until the neck joint at the 14th fret. This is partly down to the relatively flat, 15-inch fretboard radius, but also the Grand Pacific's new "compound carve" neck profile; essentially, the neck (made of a satin-finished neo-tropical mahogany) moves from a slight V at the nut to a rounded C at the neck junction, with a rounded, ridge-less heel. It's comfortable and feels organic as you move up and down the neck.

The 717 is surely one of the best all-around acoustic guitars I've played: With its full-bodied, weighty notes for fingerpicking, it would be entirely at home single-tracked live with a solo vocal, but with its lush harmonics popping out in full strum, there's little doubt it'd produce a nice filtered zing effect as well for rock and acoustic pop rhythms. (Both guitars' low-end character changes dramatically as your picking hand moves across, and to either side of, the soundhole, for lots of tonal possibilities.) There's simply nothing missing from its sound, and like the 517, it has a decidedly un-woofy and punchy low-end, which, perhaps the result of the V-Class bracing or just Taylor's top-shelf guitar design, is immensely appealing.

Playing the 717 is a bit like getting all the bodacious benefits of a dreadnought, but with the contoured bass response and bold mids of slightly smaller-bodied guitar. That said, there's a volume ceiling to both of these instruments—while there's plenty of focused power in front of the box, you're not going to get the kind of sheer projection you'd expect from an auditorium- or orchestra-sized guitar.

PACIFIC DREAMS

Our 517e boasts Taylor's Expression System 2 pickup, which sounded predictably hi-fi through a Fender Acoustasonic 90 amp, an SWR Strawberry Blonde, and a Universal Audio Apollo Twin audio interface using UA 610-A and other preamp types. Again, the sound was balanced, focused on a rich, powerful midrange spread, with an excellent if slightly dampened sustain and timbre at all velocities.

Both guitars will surprise longtime Taylor players, who'll certainly recognize the premium build quality, firm intonation, and note integrity on the Grand Pacific. But with its reined-in top-end overtones and more pronounced fundamental—to say nothing of its tighter, punchier bottom, naturally compressed midrange focus, and bigger note life—the Grand Pacific charts its own course in the map of Taylor's adventurous outer reaches. It's a guitar that, in cinematic terms, could be seen as the prequel to Taylor's blockbuster success with bright, vibrant modern-sounding guitars. The Grand Pacific 717 and 517e (and its sapele little brother, the 317) are, in a sense, post-modern legacy instruments in an imagined early-20th century past for a company that only began making guitars in the mid-'70s. But with V-Class architecture leading the way structurally and sonically, the Grand Pacific line could well be seen as a journey back to the future.

For more on Powers' vision for the Grand Pacific, visit AcousticGuitar.com. AG

SHARED SPECS

BODY Grand Pacific body; torrefied Sitka spruce top with V-Class bracing and maple/Sitka spruce bridge plate; sapele binding; maple/sapele rosette; Silent Satin finish with natural or Wild Honey Burst top

NECK 25.5"-scale neo-tropical mahogany neck with compound carve; 20-fret West African ebony fingerboard, 15" radius; 1-3/4" wide at nut; silver side dots; West African ebony head-plate; satin finish; Taylor nickel-plated tuners

OTHER West African ebony bridge and bridge pins; Micarta saddle; black Micarta nut; Elixir phosphor bronze, medium gauge (.013–.056); hardshell case

MADE IN USA

taylorguitars.com

BUILDER'S EDITION 717 GRAND PACIFIC

BODY Solid Indian rosewood back and sides

NECK MOP arrowhead inlays

OTHER 717e (with Taylor Expression System 2 electronics), $3,199 street

PRICE $2,899 street

BUILDER'S EDITION 517e GRAND PACIFIC

BODY Solid neo-tropical mahogany back and sides

NECK Acrylic arrowhead inlays

ELECTRONICS Taylor Expression System 2

OTHER 517 (without electronics), $2,799 street

PRICE $2,999 street



MASTER THE BLUES IN THE STYLE OF THE GREATS!



Pete Madsen shares the secrets behind the styles of 12 all-time great pre- and postwar guitarists, from **Elizabeth Cotten** to **Charley Patton** to **Alvin Youngblood Hart**. Also includes:

- R.L. Burnside
- Son House
- Skip James
- Robert Johnson
- Memphis Minnie
- Jimmy Page
- Kelly Joe Phelps
- Tampa Red
- Booker White

This comprehensive guide is available in two different formats: Book & Video Download Package and PDF & Video Download Package. Each contains written instruction, TAB, notation, plus 3 hours of video!

ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY

store.AcousticGuitar.com



The C100 features a Sitka spruce top and Honduran mahogany back and sides.

Collings C100

Collings' new shape packs a powerful punch in a deep-bodied package

BY TONY MARCUS

When you think of the Collings guitar company, one of the things that stands out is nonpareil workmanship. The new C100 is certainly no exception. Although it's not a fancy guitar by any means, everything about it shouts "quality." The mahogany back, sides, and neck and Sitka spruce top are woods that traditionally are found on midline instruments, but in recent years players have come to realize that you can make fine guitars out of many woods, and that mahogany has its own tonal personality, which many players find to be their favorite.

In terms of size and shape, the C100 seems like an amalgam of the Collings C10 and SJ models, larger than the former and a bit smaller than the latter (though even deeper, at 4-3/4 inches). In trim, the C100 also falls between those two models. The reviewed example features a very tastefully shaded top, set off by a half-herringbone trim, with both the top and back bound in ivoroid plastic. Restrained design is seen in the simple dots of the pearl position markers, as well as in the unbound peghead, which sports no decoration other than the Collings logo in mother-of-pearl.

Quite narrow and even grains run throughout the Sitka top, and the ample cross-grain silking is a sign of perfectly cut wood with no runout. The tuners are open-geared Waverlys, which are as good as you can get, and nicely complement the traditional look of the instrument. The frets are on the small side, and perfectly finished, as one might expect. An interesting detail is that while the finish on the body is traditional nitrocellulose lacquer, the neck has a more durable polyester finish, thus combining the sonic superiority of lacquer with the longer lasting polyester where sound isn't an issue. My only (and very small) cavil would be that the nut slots (particularly the B and high-E strings) could have been a tiny bit lower, though of course that's easily accomplished later should a player prefer it.

Now, all that is very nice, but that's not why people tend to buy a guitar. How does it play and sound? As with the perfection of the fit and finish, the playability of Collings instruments is legendary, and the C100 delivers as expected. The 1-11/16-inch nut and 2-3/16-inch string-spacing at the saddle would seem to indicate that this guitar is primarily aimed at flatpickers, and it does function very well indeed with a plectrum, delivering a wide range of tonal choices and a breadth of headroom. *(Collings responds that the C100 is also available with 1-3/4-inch string spacing at the nut.)*

As with the perfection of the fit and finish, the playability of Collings instruments is legendary, and the C100 delivers as expected.

You can draw a lot of volume out of the box, with unscalloped top braces keeping the sound from getting too boomy. There is still plenty of fundamental in the low E of the sixth string, which may be a function of the depth of the body. The body resonance is centered around a low G, but that doesn't make that fretted note stand out. In fact, the response of all notes is remarkably even. I noticed that the second harmonic (the one you get if you lightly touch a string over the seventh fret while playing it open) is particularly lively, giving a warmth to the tone that I appreciate a great deal.

The narrower string-spacing makes fingerstyle playing a bit trickier, at least for my large hands, but the guitar does respond nicely to the light touch of bare fingers. The string action on the instrument provided was also more designed for the heavier attack of a flatpick, as are the medium-gauge strings provided, but of course there's plenty of saddle to lower if a player is looking for the ultimate ease of playing with just fingers, and my impression is that the guitar's voice would still be very strong with light-gauge strings.

This is a long-scale guitar (the same as most dreadnoughts and OM models), and the combination of a fairly wide lower bout (15-7/8 inches) and quite a deep body (4-3/4 inches) might strike some smaller players as less than comfortable, but the relatively narrow waist (9-1/2 inches) compensates some for this. When I arpeggiate a chord, each note rings nicely and separately, yet the chord itself also blends together most appealingly.

Collings suggests this guitar would suit a singer-songwriter, and I can see its versatility shining in that role. As the body shape isn't an exact reproduction of a classic vintage instrument, it won't immediately have a built-in customer base, but will have to earn one by its suitability to many playing styles. And, while it's hard to imagine a bluegrass guitarist, for example, choosing such a non-traditional shape, the C100 does have a sonic profile that should make it appealing to players of diverse kinds of music. As the slightly less-wide lower bout (when compared with the Collings SJ) is made up for by a slightly deeper body, I can't say if a player who finds the SJ a touch big will find the C100 a better match for them. Certainly the mahogany body of the latter will give a different sound—and a very pleasing one it is.

The price for the Collings C100 is $4,680. In a day when there are some pretty impressive imported instruments available for under $1,000, a buyer has to be willing to spring for the craftsmanship, high-quality materials, and attention to detail that are the hallmark of Collings instruments. The C100 is short on flash, but long on sound and playability. As with any new model, the jury is out on whether it will find a substantial market, but it is most definitely worthy of one. **AG**

SPECS

BODY 15-7/8"-wide C100 body; Sitka spruce top with prewar-style non-scalloped X-braces; Honduran mahogany back and sides; tortoise pickguard; high-gloss nitrocellulose lacquer finish

NECK 25-1/2"-scale mahogany neck with C-shape profile; adjustable truss rod; mortise-and-tenon hybrid neck joint; ebony fingerboard with mother-of-pearl dots; 1-11/16" nut; nickel Waverly 16:1 tuners; high-gloss polyester resin finish

OTHER Bone nut and saddle; ebony bridge with 2-3/16" spacing; ebony bridge pins with mother-of-pearl dots; D'Addario EJ17 strings (.013–.056); deluxe TKL hardshell case

MADE IN USA

PRICE $4,140 retail; $4,680 (as tested with Western Shaded sunburst top)

collingsguitars.com

CEntrance MixerFace R4

A rechargeable battery-powered audio interface for laptops and mobile devices

BY BILL LEIGH

MixerFace R4 works with a variety of apps, including GarageBand.



There are scores of available audio interfaces—those essential gadgets for recording digitally on a computer, tablet, or mobile phone. What makes the CEntrance MixerFace R4 different? Lots. For starters, it's got two Neutrik combo jack channels for XLR or 1/4-inch inputs, yet it still fits comfortably in your pocket alongside your phone and keys. But what really sets the MixerFace apart is its rechargeable lithium-polymer battery, which can provide seven to eight hours of plug-free use. That means you can truly use it on the go without worrying about charging or finding an outlet.

Designed for musicians, journalists, voiceover artists, or anyone needing high-quality mobile audio production, the R4 works with computers as well as iOS and Android devices, provided you have the right cables, such as Apple's Lightning-to-USB camera adapter (widely available for $40 or less), which is required for use with an iOS device. CEntrance rightly touts the R4's Jasmine Mic Preamps for clean gain, and phantom power for enabling condenser microphones. You can switch each channel between Hi- and Lo-Z inputs depending on whether you're using a microphone or instrument-level signals.

I recorded an acoustic guitar into Logic X Pro with both a direct signal from the onboard pickup and a Rode condenser mic, but I could have also used two mics. The result was a pair of clean, strong tracks that captured my guitar's warm, zingy character. I also used the R4 to make crystal-clear recordings in my iPhone's GarageBand app, tracking a couple of guitar parts and a handful of vocal harmonies with satisfying results.

The R4 is super rugged, with a rounded aluminum chassis and solid-feeling potentiometers and jacks. It has a handful of recessed dipswitches for phantom power—engaging the high-pass filters on the input channels, and toggling between Hi-Z and Lo-Z—so plan on keeping a pen or other pointy tool handy for changing those settings. In addition to the headphone out, a pair of 1/8-inch balanced outputs can drive monitors, and a stereo aux channel can act as an effects bus or additional input. In other words, the R4 is a true mixer. The two main channels each have gain controls with helpful signal and peak LEDs, and a second monitor blend knob for mixing between the input signal and the USB signal for zero-latency monitoring.

I switched one channel to Hi-Z for recording acoustic guitar, electric bass, and electric guitar tracks direct. The results were solid and musical, both with high-output instruments and a passive vintage Fender Precision. Vocal tracks were similarly successful, and not having to worry about staying tethered to a power source meant it was easy to try different recording environments for the best results. A three-dot battery meter right next to the charging jack let me know how much power was left, and the R4 impressively lasted for most of a daylong home-recording session without needing additional charge. I learned the hard way to make sure to hit that power button, since the battery's charge depletes when the unit is on, whether or not it's in use.

I love audio gadgets, and the CEntrance MixerFace R4 is now among my new favorites. It's a truly mobile recording interface and mixer, steps beyond what's typically available for mobile phone and tablet recording, while providing pro-level sound and functionality both for computers and mobile devices. CEntrance has a decades-long track record of making digital recording components for other brands. It's exciting to see what the company is able to do under its own label. **AG**

SPECS

INPUTS Two combo jack inputs for XLR or 1/4" instrument or line-level sources, each with switchable impedance, high-pass filters, and blendable zero-latency monitoring; stereo 1/8" aux input

OUTPUTS Headphone jack, balanced 1/8" monitor outputs, stereo aux output

OTHER 48V phantom power, USB A/D output jack, USB power jack

ASSEMBLED IN USA

PRICE $349 street

centrance.com

CloudVocal iSolo Choice

Wireless guitar microphone system

BY EDDIE SCHER

Projecting the tone and dynamics of an acoustic instrument at volume shouldn't be that difficult. But with sound reinforcement, it's often the simplest things that are the biggest challenges. You can dial in your tone to perfection at home, but say hello to a drummer, or the rowdy party at table two, or the big bouncy brick wall in the back of the room, and amplification can get very complicated, very quickly.

A pickup plugged into an amplifier gives you the most control. But now you've reinvented the Telecaster, and any change in volume is going to have a big influence on how you sound. A microphone is the best way to preserve the response and tone of an acoustic instrument, but playing into a microphone quickly loses its charm when you realize that even slight movements can change everything. Oh, and feedback.

The CloudVocal iSolo Choice is a wireless condenser microphone specifically designed to capture the full dynamics and tone of an acoustic guitar, attach and detach easily from your instrument, and free you from dangling wires.

Elegant Apple-like design makes setting up and syncing the pickup/transmitter and preamp/receiver straightforward. The microphone unit is tiny, smaller than a business card, and its metal enclosure is finished in an unobtrusive matte black. There are two microphones: one on the underside of the unit that picks up vibrations directly from the soundboard, the other on a flexible gooseneck that allows you to move the microphone around to find the tone you're looking for. Sonically, it's just like having a condenser mic in front of the instrument, except that it moves with the guitar and stays clear out of your way.

The kit comes with three mounting options. The pickup fits snuggly into a soft rubber soundhole cover that reduces feedback. Another option is a soft rubber mount that suspends the pickup above the soundhole. The mounts are available in two sizes to fit classical or acoustic guitar soundholes. Both worked great with my trusty Gibson and a borrowed Martin.

Things got more interesting when using the two-sided sticky tape mount. I switched between two recent National resonator guitars and two vintage archtops dozens of times. None of these instruments are easy to amplify. It took me a while before I was willing to try the sticky tape on my prewar guitars, but when I did I found applying and removing the mic was simple and didn't leave any residue. The tape holds the mic tightly to the guitar, and the kit includes a storage card you stick the microphone unit onto to keep dust and debris off the sticky pad, so the same pad should last a long time.

For each guitar I was able to quickly find the ideal place to position the transmitter and gooseneck mic. On the archtops, the sweet spot was behind the bridge with the gooseneck pointed into an f-hole. The mic delivered the punchy midrange that makes these guitars ideal for swing comping and Gypsy jazz. On the resonators, I was happiest with the unit positioned on the lower bout, out of the way, with the gooseneck reaching up into the grill to capture deep growls. The mic delivered the wide dynamic range, overtones, and harmonics of a metal slide moving on metal strings through metal cones without any of the non-musical thumps you can get with the wrong setup—especially when you hit open-tuned strings hard.

The mic unit has an on/off button and a three position-gain switch—all the controls I needed, as the preamp/receiver unit includes controls for treble and bass EQ, and gain, and master volume. A mixer control on the receiver allows you to blend another pickup to the iSolo's sound. There are also four built-in effects: room and hall reverbs, chorus, and delay, with separate controls to dial in the effect parameter—the extent or speed of the effect—and a dial to control the wet/dry blend. In just a few minutes, I was able to find a great modern acoustic-bluesman wet chorus tone and rockabilly slap-back delay. And all that tone control on the preamp means less gear in the gig bag, fewer cables and batteries to worry about. The room and hall tones proved their value in the final important feature of the iSolo—recording.

Open up GarageBand or your recording software of choice, plug the iSolo interface drive, which is basically a USB memory stick, into your computer, and what you play is wirelessly transmitted to your computer as a mono input source. It took me a while to get the interface to work, and the iSolo is such a new offering that I didn't find a detailed manual or the myriad DIY videos that are usually available for these kinds of products online. But once I established the connection, I was able to get great-sounding recordings from the guitar, beamed directly through the device to the computer.



Reading about the iSolo, I was hoping for a setup that would attach securely and then leave no trace, capture all the tone of my acoustic instruments, and operate simply and reliably to make life on the bandstand easier, and not more complicated. After hours of playing with different instruments and setups, through different amps and PAs, and at an outdoor gig on a crowded stage, the iSolo delivered on its promise. **AG**

SPECS

MICROPHONE TRANSMITTER Condenser mic on flexible gooseneck; built-in soundboard mic; onboard preamp with three gain modes (low, medium, high); USB charger

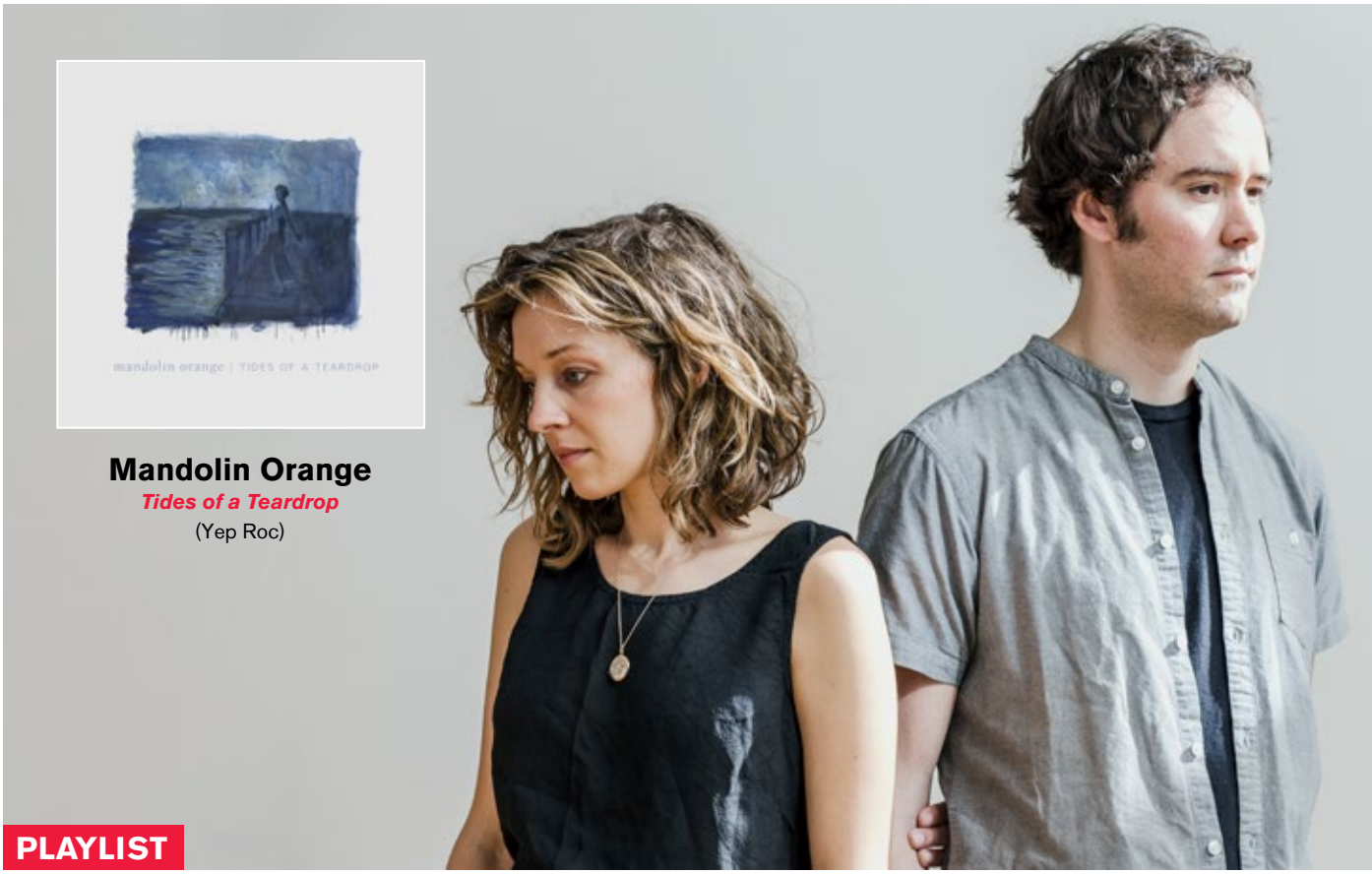
STAGE RECEIVER 1/4" instrument input with line/mic level control (0 dB–40 dB gain); 1/4" balanced/unbalanced out; bass (±6dB@200 Hz) and treble (±6dB@8 kHz) EQ controls; ±6dB gain; 5-hour operation time, near mode (7 hours in far mode); 9-volt DC input for charging

EFFECTS Reverb (hall and room), chorus, and delay with blend level control and effect parameter level control

MADE IN Taiwan

PRICE $499 street

cloudvocal.com



Mandolin Orange
Tides of a Teardrop
(Yep Roc)

KENDALL BAILEY

PLAYLIST

Shades of Loneliness and Loss

Mandolin Orange's quietly compelling folk-Americana

BY JEFFREY PEPPER RODGERS

Over the last decade, the North Carolina–based duo of Andrew Marlin and Emily Frantz, aka Mandolin Orange, has emerged as a quietly compelling voice on the folky side of Americana, traveling the path blazed by Gillian Welch and David Rawlings. *Tides of a Teardrop* is Mandolin Orange's sixth album overall and the follow-up to the 2016 release *Blindfaller,* which helped launch the duo into playing major festivals like Newport Folk and Bonnaroo and, somewhat miraculously, surpassing 100 million streams on Spotify.

As on *Blindfaller,* the new album features a band—supplementing the duo's acoustic guitars, mandolin (Marlin), and fiddle (Frantz), are Josh Oliver on electric and acoustic guitar and piano, Clint Mullican on bass, and Joe Westerlund on drums. But the additional instrumentation is used so sparingly, and the sound in general is so spacious, that it never masks the central impression of a duo playing and singing in book-matched harmony.

Like much of Mandolin Orange's music, *Tides of a Teardrop* has a reflective mood, with subdued arrangements that never accelerate above mid-tempo. The songs, all written by Marlin, contemplate shades of loneliness and loss. There is a specific personal backstory to that theme: the passing of Marlin's mother when he was 18. But in songs like "Suspended in Heaven," a straight-up three-chord waltz, he writes about her in the language not of singer-songwriter autobiography, but of an old Carter Family hymn. "Mother is gone, her body's at rest/ Her spirit is on its heavenly quest," he sings. "The sun and the moon just two points of light/ A beacon from home, an anchor in flight."

Instrumentally, Marlin's and Frantz's acoustic guitars provide the rhythmic bedrock throughout. Marlin has a nice, understated touch on the mandolin, dropping in tasteful melodic phrases and short solos over the steady boom-chick of Frantz's flattop. In "Lonely All the Time," which sounds like it's straight out of a '50s Nashville session, there's a sweet passage with electric guitar, mando, and fiddle tag-teaming a solo break. But in this band, any instrumental work takes a backseat to the vocals and lyrics. Marlin and Frantz don't really sing in high-lonesome style—he sticks with the lower and middle registers, and they don't drive their voices too hard—but they blend beautifully and effortlessly, with their phrasing locked in like the best country duets.

Tides of a Teardrop is not an album that demands your attention, but one that invites you in and grows with each listen. And despite the often somber mood of the songs, in the end they seem to make peace with loss and absence. As Marlin sings in the opening track, "In our time together, her memory will ever shine like golden embers in the night." **AG**



David Crosby
Here If You Listen
(BMG)

Crosby in good company on collective effort

David Crosby insists that *Here If You Listen* isn't a solo album per se, but rather a group effort that gives equal credit to his collaborators: Becca Stevens, Michelle Willis, and Michael League. Indeed, the album emphasizes shared harmonies, acoustic strumming en masse, and more than a hint of campfire camaraderie.

With song titles like "1974" and "1967," as well as a subdued version of Joni Mitchell's "Woodstock," there is a sense that the group wants to reminisce, but mostly the songs wistfully reflect on lessons learned. "I've been thinking about dying and how to do it well," Crosby croons on "Your Own Ride," suggesting that at age 77, he can't afford any more time wasted on the way. On the other hand, "I'm No Artist" suggests the opposite: "No true desire burns within me now"—though notably it's one of the few tunes he had no hand in writing.

Reserve and resignation aside, indication of the outrage Crosby was known for early on still lingers. "Other Half Rule" references "rocket man and little hands," a not-so-subtle dig at unlikely "friends" Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump. "Janet," a track Willis wrote on her own, is a rallying cry for a woman betrayed.

A shimmery ambiance, dominated by acoustic guitars and keyboard caresses, underscores the starry-eyed sensibilities. Delicate plucking accentuates such songs as "Glory," "Vagabonds of Venus," and "Buddha on a Hill," offering yet another reason why *Here If You Listen* proves such a positive temptation.

—Lee Zimmerman

We guitarists put a huge amount of time and effort into choosing our guitars. Of course we do. But do we always think enough about our choice of capo?

Guitar necks come in different shapes and sizes - fingerboard curvature, string gauge, neck profile, height of action and fret height - a capo should be able to accommodate them all. If your capo doesn't match your guitar you'll end up with tuning problems or buzzing strings.

What if there was a capo that would **actively adapt its string pad** to match the curvature over the strings in **EVERY position, on ANY guitar** neck?

MEET THE NEW PERFORMANCE 3 CAPO WITH ADAPTIVE RADIUS TECHNOLOGY ART

A PERFECT FIT ON EVERY GUITAR, EVERY TIME

FREE LIFETIME WARRANTY

www.G7th.com

THE FUTURE OF CAPOS

Available from March 2019.
Find out more here: www.G7th.com/P3

WATCH MANDOLIN ORANGE PLAY "GOLDEN EMBERS."
acousticguitar.com/tag/march-april-2019



TOM BUSH

Golden Embers

A tear-jerking track with sensitive acoustic guitar work

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

At a recent editorial meeting in *AG*'s San Francisco Bay Area headquarters, the status of "Golden Embers," a Mandolin Orange selection slated for arrangement, came up. At least two staff members confessed to being moved to tears by the video to this poignant song—about the grief that the singer-songwriter-multi-instrumentalist Andrew Marlin and his father shared following the death of the younger Marlin's mother.

Marlin plays "Golden Embers" in the somber key of A minor, with a capo at the second fret causing it to sound in B minor. Though this is a streamlined arrangement, Marlin's guitar part in the intro—a duet with Emily Frantz on the fiddle—is transcribed note for note from the original studio recording. Use this part only as a guideline for creating your own melodic embellishments within the chordal structure; listen to the recording and you'll hear that Marlin never plays it quite the same way twice.

The intro's 16-bar progression also forms the foundation of the verses, and speaking of embellishments, Marlin adds plenty throughout that are not reflected in the arrangement's chord frames, to keep the notation from being cluttered. He sometimes, whether intentionally or inadvertently, hits the open first string for a fleeting Fmaj7 sound. In other instances, he throws in a low G on the C chord, which sounds especially smooth between the C and G chords of the chorus. Be sure to try these moves for yourself.

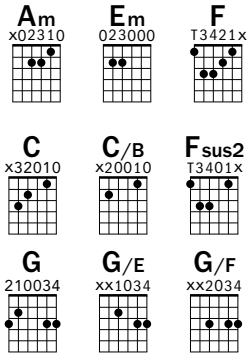
During the interlude, Frantz and the upright bassist Clint Mullican play an attractive figure in unison, one that also works out nicely on the acoustic guitar. You can try it an octave above the bass, as suggested in the first two bars, or in the same octave as the violin, shown in the next two bars. To emulate Frantz's sharp pizzicato, use palm muting. (Remember, lightly rest your picking hand's palm on the strings as you pick, making sure that the pitches are clearly discernable.)

The interlude is also a good opportunity for a guitar solo. Try playing one as Marlin does on mandolin, using notes within the A natural minor scale (A B C D E F G)— adding the occasional flatted fifth (E♭) for bluesy effect—in a kind of restrained and searching way that will serve the song. AG

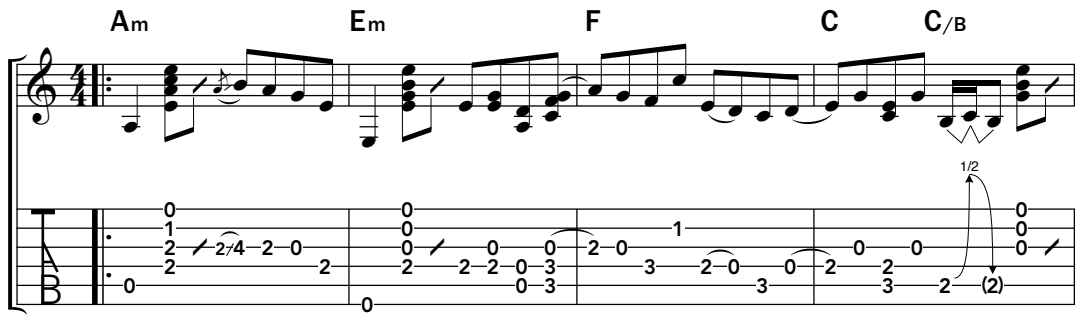
GOLDEN EMBERS

WORDS AND MUSIC BY ANDREW MARLIN

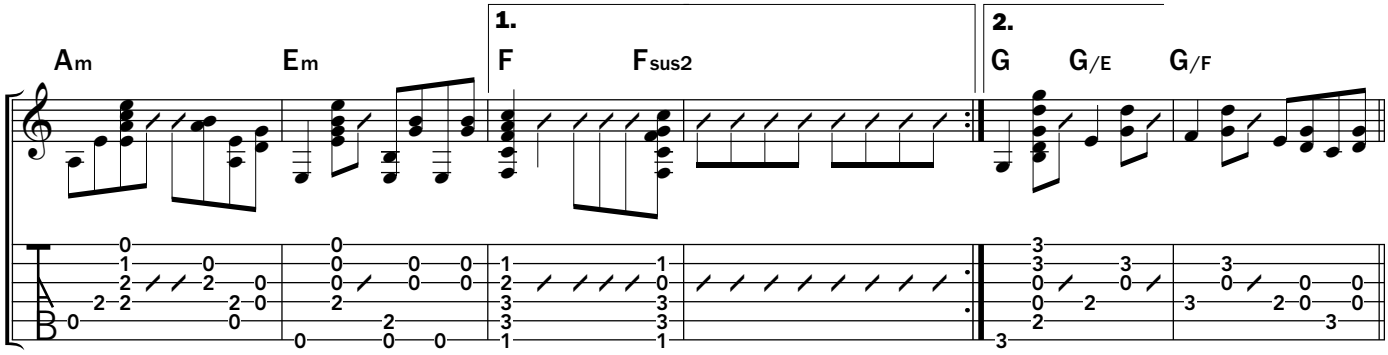
***Chords, Capo II**



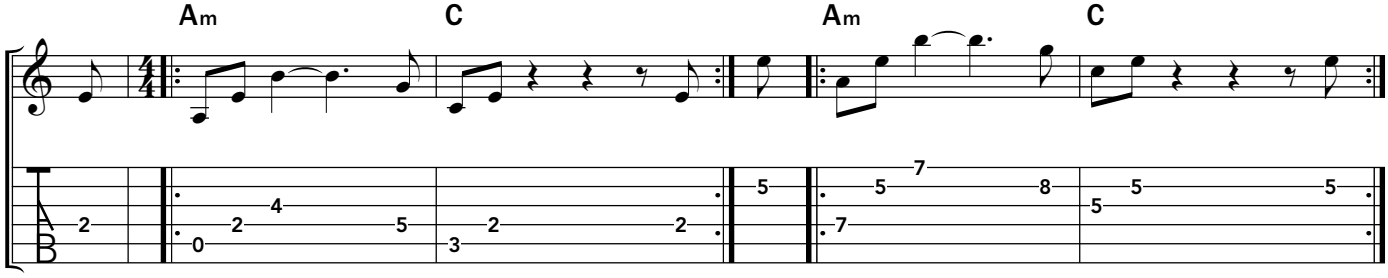
Intro/Verse Figure



***Music sounds a major second higher than written.**



Interlude



Intro

Am Em F C C/B
Am Em F Fsus2
Am Em F C C/B
Am Em G G/E G/F

Am Em F C C/B
1. Just like an old friend, kinder than expected

Am Em F Fsus2
That Cadillac came and gave our girl a ride

Am Em F C C/B
Loss has no end, it binds to our connection

Am Em G G/E G/F
And we don't speak of it, we don't even try

Chorus

Fsus2 G
If you could help me to share the trouble

C F
That you've got burning in you, then you can help me

C G
And in our time together, her memory will ever

F
Shine like golden embers in the night

Interlude

Am Em F C C/B
Am Em F Fsus2

Cont. on p. 96

© 2019 Party Fowl. Administered by Songs O Routie, BMI. All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured. Used by Permission.

Cont. from p. 95

Am Em F C C/B
2. I miss the old hymns when she used to sing

Am Em F Fsus2
The sparrows spread their mortal wings

Am Em F C C/B
Now they've all lighted with the silence of strings

Am Em G G/E G/F
Like notes on the pages, she breathed life into all things

Repeat Chorus

Interlude (half-time feel)

Am C ***(Play 8x)***

Bridge

Am C Am C
Just like an old friend, reach out to me

Am C Am C
Bathe me in the light of understanding

Chorus (a tempo)

Fsus2 G
And try to help me to share the trouble

C F
That you've got burning in you, then you can help me

C G
And in our time together, her memory will ever

F
Shine like golden embers in the night

Outro (half-time feel)

Am Em F C C/B
Am Em F
Am Em F C C/B
Am Em G G/E G/F

Steve Kaufman's Acoustic Kamps

Look at this *unbelievable 2019 Instructor Line-Up!*

Specially Designed for the *True Beginner* through Professional
On The Campus of Maryville College in Maryville, TN - 17 mi. So. of Knoxville, TN.

Old Time and Traditional Week - June 9-15
Flatpicking: Steve Kaufman, Tim May, Doug Yeomans; **Rhythm Guitar:** Josh Goforth; **Fingerpicking:** Clive Carroll, Mary Flower, Eric Lagosch; **Mountain Dulcimer:** Sarah Morgan; **Hammered Dulcimer:** Ted Yoder; **Old Time Banjo:** Steve Baughman; **Old Time Fiddle:** Erynn Marshall, Rachel Eddy; **Old Time Singing:** Alice Gerrard; **Old Time Mandolin:** Carl Jones;

Bluegrass Week - June 16-22: Flatpicking: Dan Crary, Mark Cosgrove, Beppe Gambetta, Grant Gordy, Tyler Grant, Ross Martin; **Rhythm Guitar:** Dan Boner; **Mandolin:** David Benedict, Andrew Collins, Tim Connell, Bruce Graybill, Andy Hatfield, Jordan Ramsey; **Bluegrass Fiddle:** Bronwyn Keith-Hynes, Kenny Kosek, Nate Lee; **Bluegrass Banjo:** BB Bowness, John Carlini, Gary Davis, Alan Munde; **Songwriting:** Donna Ulisse; **Bass:** Steve Roy, Nate Sabat; **Bluegrass Singing:** Dale Ann Bradley, Don Rigsby; **Ukulele:** Gerald Ross, Tony Anthonisen; **Dobro ™:** Jimmy Heffernan, Phil Leadbetter; **Beginner 101:** Annie Savage; **Jam Instructors:** Keith Yoder and David Firestine

Your $900.00 Registration *plus tax and fees* **Includes:**
All Classes, Housing and Meals *plus* ~
Four Daily Jams for Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
Highly Focused Afternoon Instructor Sessions
Ensemble Work, Ensemble Concert, Contra Dance WK 1
Rotating Classes, Nightly Star-Studded Concerts
Open Mic Time on the Main Stage, Coffee House Time
Airport Shuttle Service from Knoxville Airport (TYS)
Plus much, much more….

Register Today - It Only Takes a Moment!

www.flatpik.com

Write or Call for a Free Kamp Brochure
PO Box 1020, Alcoa, TN 37701
Steve@Flatpik.com or 865-982-3808

You're Ready Now *so* Register Today!

Players' Choice Acoustic Guitar Gold Awards 2002
Voted "Best Camps"
Each Year Since 2002
Find Out Why!

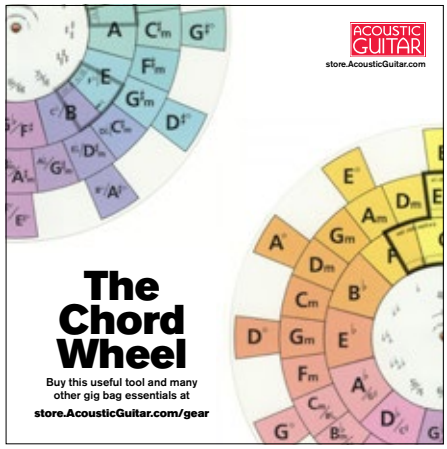




ACOUSTIC CONNECTIONS.

Microphones and pickups for guitars, violins, mandolins, banjos, and other stringed instruments. Brands include: MiniFlex 2Mic Soundhole Microphones; GHS Soundhole mics; McIntyre, L.R. Baggs, and B-Band pickups; Elixir strings and Homepsun Tapes. International orders are welcome. On the Web at www.acousticon.com

Acoustic Connections



ADVERTISER INDEX

Acoustic Guitar Store, store.acousticguitar.com 87
Acoustic Alaska Guitar Camp, acousticalaska.com 79
Acoustic Remedy Cases, acousticremedycases.com 60
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., alfredpublishing.com 53
Alvarez, alvarezguitars.com 7
American Music Furniture, americanmusicfurniture.com ... 42
Armadillo Enterprises, lunaguitars.com 81
Artisan Guitar Show, artisanguitarshow.com 82
Ashokan Fiddle & Dance Workshop, ashokan.org 82
Bread & Roses, breadandroses.org 83
C.F. Martin & Co., Inc., martinguitar.com 100
California Coast Music Camp, musiccamp.org 60
Centrum Foundation, centrum.org 9
CruzTools, cruztools.com 83
ELIXIR Strings, elixirstrings.com 8
Elliott Capo, elliottcapo.com 83
Fender Musical Instruments Corporation, fender.com ... 14
Fishman, fishman.com 43
G7th Ltd., g7th.com 93
Guitarcast, guitarcast.tv 99
Guitars in the Classroom, guitarsintheclassroom.org 96
Guptill Music, guptillmusic.com 83
Honz Technology, LLC, tonewoodamp.com 80
Kyser Musical Products, Inc., kysermusical.com 33
LR Baggs Corp., lrbaggs.com 34
Mimi Fox, mimifoxguitar.com 74
Mitchell Acoustic Guitars, mitchellguitars.com 35
Original Guitar Chair, originalguitarchair.com 83
Phoenix Guitar Company, phoenixguitarco.com 83
Sam Ash, samash.com 44
Shubb Capos, shubb.com 79
Sisters Folk Festival, sistersfolkfestival.org 74
Steven Kaufman Enterprises, Inc, flatpik.com 96
Stringletter Travel, stringletter.com/travel 54
Strings by Mail, stringsbymail.com 82
Sweetwater Sound, sweetwater.com 4
Taylor-Listug, Inc., taylorguitars.com 2
The Swannanoa Gathering, swangathering.com 42
Yamaha Corporation of America, yamaha.com 3

Guild M-20

The Nick Drake guitar–or not?

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

After Nick Drake appeared seated with a Guild M-20 on the cover of his 1971 album, *Bryter Layter*, the instrument became closely associated with the singer-songwriter and his particular approach to the six-string (see lesson on page 22). But as it happens, the instrument wasn't his—it (as well as the dandyish footwear in the foreground) belonged to Nigel Waymouth, the photographer who shot the album cover—it's likely Drake played a Martin D-28 or Levin dreadnought.

The Economy M-20 was Guild's least expensive offering when it was introduced in 1958. It was also the first model to roll out of Guild's production line in 1967, shortly after the company moved its factory to Westerly, Rhode Island, from Hoboken, New Jersey. With its mahogany top, back, sides, and neck, and its spare appointments, the concert-sized M-20 was a good choice for getting new employees up to speed to build fancier models.

Owing to its association with Drake—it's often called the "Nick Drake guitar"—the M-20 is one of Guild's most sought-after vintage steel-strings. The 1950s examples are the rarest, and are also known to be more lightly built than those made in the '60s. In spectacular condition, the 1959 M-20 shown here shows the most minor signs of use—the occasional ding or dent, as well as a refret.

But despite its collectible status, the M-20 remains a relatively affordable option for the budget-minded guitarist in search of that old wood. At press time, a mid-1960s example in player-grade condition was spotted on reverb.com for $1,150—less expensive than most, if not all, solid-wood guitars made in America today. AG



GEORGE ASLAENDER/RETROFRET GUITARS

Acoustic Guitar (ISSN – 1049-9261, USPS - 5581) is published bi-monthly by String Letter Publishing, Inc., 501 Canal Blvd., Suite J, Richmond, CA 94804. Periodical postage paid at Richmond, CA 94804 and additional mailing offices. Printed in USA. Canada Post: Publications mail Agreement #40612608. Canada Returns to be sent to Imex Global Solutions, PO Box 32229, Hartford, CT 06150-2229. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to *Acoustic Guitar*, String Letter Publishing, Inc., PO Box 91149, Long Beach, CA 90809-1149.

BEGINNER OR ADVANCED, ACOUSTIC OR ELECTRIC, FOLK OR BLUES OR JAZZ OR ROCK—WHATEVER YOUR INTERESTS ARE, GUITARCAST HAS YOU COVERED. ACCESS HUNDREDS OF VIDEOS FROM THE MASTER TEACHERS AT ACOUSTIC GUITAR MAGAZINE, HOMESPUN, HAL LEONARD, AND MORE. PLUS, WE'RE ADDING SOMETHING NEW EACH AND EVERY MONTH.

guitarcast


Acoustic Blues Guitar Basics


Pick Power!


Sue Foley: Guitar Woman


Beyond Basics: Rock Guitar Rhythm Chops


Scottish Songs for Guitar


The Complete Acoustic Guitarist

AND SO MUCH MORE!

START YOUR FREE TRIAL TODAY: GUITARCAST.TV

HAL•LEONARD®

marlene'smusic

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

Alfred

homespun



VTS Top

Titanium Truss Rod

Liquidmetal® Red Dot Pins

Carbon Fiber Bridge Plate

Modern Deluxe

Gold Open-Gear Tuners

Pearl Inlaid Logo

Wood Binding

Gold Frets

SOPHISTICATION meets PERFORMANCE

Introducing the all-new Modern Deluxe series, only from Martin Guitar. Custom and state-of-the-art features are combined to create a highly advanced, elegant instrument. The resulting playability and vintage tone make Modern Deluxe a guitar like no other. Also available in a D-18, D-28, and 000-28.

C.F. Martin & Co. EST. 1833

martinguitar.com/deluxe

Fender®

AMERICAN ACOUSTASONIC™ SERIES TELECASTER®



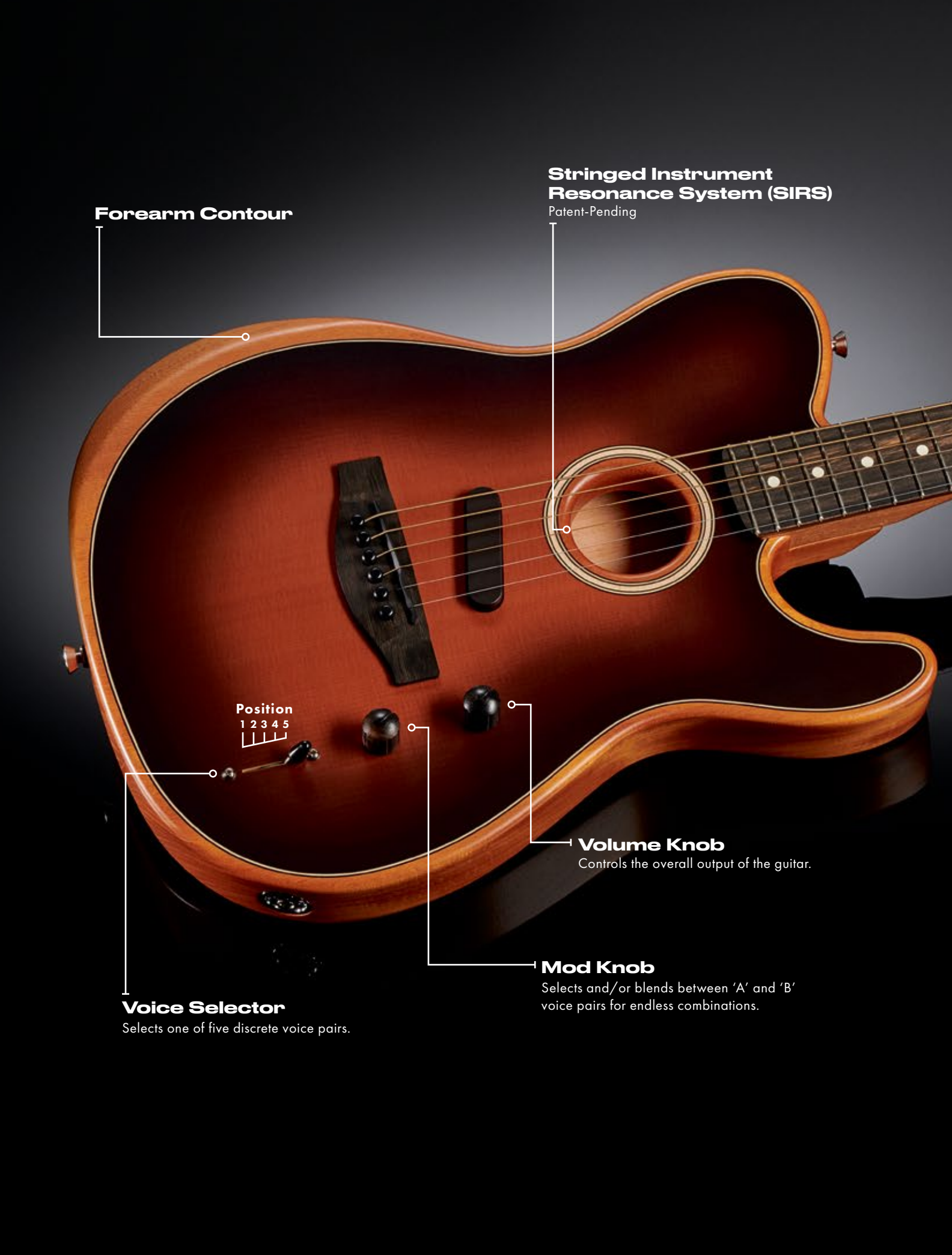


ACOUSTIC. ELECTRIC.

EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.

The American Acoustasonic Series Telecaster represents the next era in Fender craftsmanship and innovation. From acoustic shape-shifting to electric rhythm tones, this powerful guitar delivers new sonic expression from the studio to the stage.




Forearm Contour
Stringed Instrument Resonance System (SIRS)
Patent-Pending
Position
1 2 3 4 5
Volume Knob
Controls the overall output of the guitar.
Mod Knob
Selects and/or blends between 'A' and 'B' voice pairs for endless combinations.
Voice Selector
Selects one of five discrete voice pairs.



ACOUSTIC ENGINE CONTROLS & DESIGN

The Acoustasonic Telecaster is designed to inspire, mixing future technology with organic feel and playability.

Every aspect of construction serves that experience. Thin and comfortable with an open-pore satin finish, the Acoustasonic Telecaster avoids everything that makes acoustic guitars feel clunky. The low-profile hollow body won't stress your shoulder and the smooth-playing mahogany neck sits right in your hand, while an inset top and natural wood integrated forearm contour make it easy to play. Our patent-pending Stringed Instrument Resonance System (SIRS) uses a "waterfall" design to control the flow of air into the body, creating a naturally loud voice and lively harmonics. That means the Acoustasonic Telecaster sounds as great on your lap as it does on a stage.

Three pickup systems work together to create the Fender and Fishman®-designed Acoustic Engine—a mix of classic analog and future technologies that optimizes the natural sound of the guitar, and then modifies the resonance to deliver an unparalleled collection of voices.

Fishman Under-Saddle Transducer

The acoustic tone begins with Fishman's highly-acclaimed Matrix Narrow pickup.

Acoustasonic Enhancer

Installed under the bridge, the Acoustasonic Enhancer listens exclusively to the soundboard, bringing out the glorious "thunk" and attack that make percussive playing styles so fun.

Acoustasonic Noiseless™

Designed for authentic, hum-free Fender electric tone, the Acoustasonic Noiseless pickup can be played solo or blended with the acoustic voices.

VOICE SELECTIONS

The Acoustasonic Telecaster offers five discreet voice pairs — a curated collection of acoustic and electric voices that can be played solo or blended via the Mod Knob to create infinite combinations.

POSITION 5: CORE ACOUSTICS

A: Sitka Spruce/Rosewood Dreadnought
Deep bass meets strident trebles for a traditional acoustic voice. Great for big bold strumming.

B: Alpine Spruce/Rosewood Auditorium
Tighter and brighter for a more modern/pop sound and a detailed midrange perfect for strumming or fingerstyle.

POSITION 4: ALTERNATIVE ACOUSTICS

A: Engelmann Spruce/Maple Small-Body
Intimate, parlor-inspired voice that's articulate and bright, best for delicate playing.

B: Sitka Spruce/Mahogany Dreadnought
Full midrange with a deep bass voice that works well for rootsy strumming or fingerstyle.

POSITION 3: PERCUSSION & ENHANCED HARMONICS

A: Sitka Spruce/Brazilian Rosewood Dreadnought
Rich and earthy with complex overtones.

B: Adds body pickup to the above voice (up to a predetermined maximum blend)
All of the above, plus a percussive top and enhanced harmonics that pop.

POSITION 2: ACOUSTICS & ELECTRIC BLEND

A: Sitka Spruce/Mahogany Dreadnought
Full-bodied, no nonsense acoustic that's earthy and articulate with a wide dynamic range.

B: Blends electric pickup to the above voice (predetermined semi-clean voice)
A rich acoustic rhythm sound meets Fender's electric tone – when you really want to drive the band.

POSITION 1: ELECTRIC

A: Fender Electric Clean
You won't believe your acoustic guitar can do this.

B: Fender Electric Fat/Semi-Clean
You really won't believe your acoustic guitar can do this.



Natural



Black



Sunburst



Sonic Gray



Surf Green

©2019 Fender Musical Instruments Corporation. FENDER, FENDER in script, TELECASTER and the distinctive headstock commonly found on Fender guitars and basses are registered trademarks of FMIC. Acoustasonic is a trademark of FMIC. Stringed Instrument Resonance System (SIRS) is U.S. Patent Pending. All rights reserved.

Fishman is a registered trademark of Fishman Transducers, Inc.



Fender®

CRAFTED IN CORONA, CALIFORNIA